



Ankin Law Office LLC

Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

162 W Grand Ave
Chicago, Illinois 60654, United States
Tel: 312-346-8780 or 800-442-6546
Fax: 312-346-8781
Email: howard@ankinlaw.com
Website: www.ankinlaw.com
Blog: www.thechicago-injury-lawyer.com

Michigan Man Faces Criminal Charges After Reading Wife's Email



We all know that reading someone else's email without their permission is a bad idea. But did you know it's quite possibly a crime? Prosecutors in Michigan think so and have charged Leon Walker with a felony based upon allegations that he read his wife's email and accessed her password without her permission.

Walker claims he accessed his wife's Gmail account out of concern for her son from a previous marriage, who's father had recently been arrested for abusing the boy's mother.

Walker was charged with violating a felony statute relating to identity theft. His case is the first time that charges have been filed under that statute in a domestic case and many lawyers are questioning the validity of the charges, as explained in this [Yahoo News article](#):

(E)xperts are saying that the "gray area" surrounding the circumstances of the situation could make it difficult for the prosecution...The defense attorney, Leon Weiss, argues that the statute is being used incorrectly. "This is a hacking statute, the kind of statute they use if you try to break into a government system or private business for some nefarious purpose. It's to protect against identity fraud, to keep somebody from taking somebody's intellectual property."

Regardless of whether the criminal charges are appropriate, it's safe to say that if nothing else, it was a bad idea for Walker to access his wife's email without her permission. Whether his conduct amounts to a felony, or even criminal conduct, remains to be seen, however. Nevertheless, it's an interesting issue and one that will no doubt crop up again in the future.

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles [workers' compensation](#) and [personal injury cases](#). Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.

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