

Sharing intimate images could land prison sentence



Michael
Matheson gets
tough on image
sharing

A new law which came into force will make it easier to prosecute people who share intimate images without consent.

Those convicted of the new offence of ‘disclosing, or threatening to disclose, an intimate photograph or film’ could face up to five years imprisonment under the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016.

A hard-hitting public awareness campaign will drive home the serious consequences of sharing intimate images or films of a current or former partner without their permission.

Michael Matheson, Justice Secretary, said: “Modern technology gives us the potential to link up or keep in touch with friends and loved ones around the world and opens up incredible opportunities, but the scale of its reach means that when it is abused to intimidate, harass or expose someone in this way, the impact can be hugely damaging.

“There is no place for this abusive and manipulative behaviour in Scotland, and the threat of sharing images without consent will be viewed just as seriously as the act of sharing.

“The maximum penalty of up to five years reflects the serious nature of this crime and anyone who shares or threatens to share an intimate image without consent will feel the full force of the law.”

The campaign has been developed in partnership with Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis Scotland, Zero Tolerance, Police Scotland and the Crown Office, all of whom are involved in dealing with the crime and its consequences.

New research shows 78 per cent of Scottish adults believe it should be illegal for someone to share an intimate image they've been sent.

This rises to 82 per cent of people in agreement that it should be illegal for someone to share an intimate image they've taken of their partner.

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