



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 12, 2016
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

ELMIRA BARTENDER SENTENCED TO NEARLY \$26,000 RESTITUTION AND FIVE YEARS OF PROBATION FOR WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD

ELMIRA – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced that an Elmira bartender who defrauded the state workers' compensation system was sentenced today to nearly \$26,000 in restitution payments and five years on probation.

James Hooks, Jr., 57, of Davis St., Elmira, was sentenced in Chemung County Court today subsequent to his July guilty plea to Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony. As part of his sentencing, he was ordered to pay \$24,584 in restitution, as well as a five percent surcharge, for Workers' Compensation payments he was not eligible for while he was also working as a weekend bartender at Ramsey's Place in Elmira.

“This defendant abused and stole from a system meant to protect honest, hard-working New Yorkers,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue to relentlessly pursue anyone who steals from the workers' compensation system for their own corrupt financial benefit.”

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Hooks, who sustained injuries while working at a grocery store in 1994, repeatedly told his insurance benefits company that he was not employed in any capacity when in fact he was working since at least 2013 as a bartender at Ramsey's Place on East Fifth Street in Elmira.

Under State law, employers are required to maintain Workers' Compensation coverage for their employees, and employees are expected to provide truthful information regarding their work activity to insurance carriers and the Workers' Compensation Board during the time they are receiving benefits.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked Chemung County District Attorney Weeden A. Wetmore and his office for prosecuting this matter, the Elmira Police Department for assisting with the arrest and the New York State Department of Labor, the PMA Companies and the Special Funds Conservation Committee for their assistance with the investigation.

###

The New York State Office of the Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General investigates fraud, abuse and/or illegal acts against the New York State Workers' Compensation system, including fraud by medical service providers, employers seeking to evade appropriate Workers' Compensation charges, and employees who fabricate injuries to fraudulently receive system benefits. Complaints and referrals are kept confidential. We can be reached by calling toll free: 1-800-367-4448, utilizing our online complaint form at

<http://www.ig.ny.gov> or sending an email to: inspector.general@ig.ny.gov. You also can write to our office at:
*Office of the Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General, Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th
Floor, Albany, New York 12223*