



# NEWS RELEASE

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

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## **ELMIRA BARTENDER PLEADS GUILTY TO OVER \$21,000 WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD**

ELMIRA – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced guilty plea of an Elmira bartender who defrauded the state workers' compensation system of more than \$21,000.

James Hooks, Jr., 57, of Davis St., Elmira, pleaded guilty in Chemung County Court today to Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony. As part of his plea, he admitted collecting \$21,326 in Workers' Compensation payments he was not eligible for while also working as a weekend bartender at Ramsey's Place 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.

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.

Hooks is due to return to Chemung County Court August 29 for sentencing.

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.

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*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](mailto: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*