



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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STATE PRISON EMPLOYEE STOLE INMATE FUNDS TO PAY DOWN CREDIT CARD DEBT

BUFFALO – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest and guilty plea of a State prison employee for possession of a forged money order sent to an inmate by that inmate’s father but which was instead used to pay her own credit card bill.

Carole Kozak, 59, of Perrysburg, a senior mail clerk for the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) assigned to the Gowanda Correctional Facility, pleaded guilty in Erie County Court today to Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Third Degree, a misdemeanor.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that in January 2016, Kozak altered a \$300 money order sent to an inmate by the inmate’s father, and then used that money order to pay her personal credit card bill.

“This defendant used her position to brazenly enrich herself through a loathsome intrusion into an inmate’s private mail,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “She violated the trust of her position and I will continue to relentlessly pursue anyone in public service who uses their public position to commit crimes.”

Kozak was released pending her sentencing scheduled in Erie County Court on Feb. 22, 2017. Internal disciplinary charges filed against Kozak by DOCCS remain pending.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the office of the Erie County District Attorney for prosecuting this matter.

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