



NEWS RELEASE

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

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WOMAN WHO STOLE NEARLY \$40,000 IN WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS MEANT FOR HER DECEASED MOTHER PLEADS GUILTY, AGREES TO PAY FULL RESTITUTION

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the felony guilty plea of a Kentucky woman who stole nearly \$40,000 in Worker's' Compensation benefits meant for her long-deceased mother, a former Orange-Ulster BOCES employee.

Sheryl A. Colson (aka Sheryl McClure), 47, of Kline Trail in New Concord, Kentucky, pleaded guilty today to the indicted charge of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony. She was arrested in Kentucky early this year, extradited to New York, and pleaded guilty in Orange County Court as part of a disposition that included her agreeing to pay full restitution of \$39,850. She is to be sentenced for her crime this summer.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Colson's mother, a former nurse at Orange-Ulster BOCES in Goshen, New York, was injured on the job in 1997 and began receiving Workers' Compensation benefits from the school. Colson's mother moved to Kentucky in 2007 and passed away in 2011, but the \$400-per-week checks kept coming from Orange-Ulster BOCES, which is self-insured. Colson, meanwhile, had access to her mother's financial affairs and continued signing the checks, depositing them into her mother's bank account and using the account's debit card to make purchases for more than two years after her mother passed away.

Colson's purchases using her deceased mother's benefits included payment of general household expenses and bills, restaurant tabs, and products from an Indiana company specializing in the production of hand-blown glass pipes and other smoking devices. In total, Colson is accused of stealing \$39,850 in benefits to which she was not entitled between Jan. 8, 2011, and Jan. 20, 2013.

"This defendant criminally enriched herself through a shockingly morbid scheme, stealing insurance benefits to which she was not entitled by manipulating her long-deceased mother's financial accounts," said Inspector General Leahy Scott. "I will continue dedicating the resources of my office to help ensure that critical benefits meant for hard-working honest New Yorkers are not fraudulently obtained."

Colson pleaded guilty before Orange County Court Judge Craig Brown and was returned to the Orange County Jail in lieu of \$39,850 cash or \$100,000 bond bail pending sentencing in Orange County Court on July 24, 2017.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the Calloway County Sheriff's Department in Kentucky and the New York State Police for assisting with the arrest and extradition, and Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler and his office for prosecuting this matter.

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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. 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