

Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:
media@npa.gov.za

Victoria & Griffiths
Mxenge Building
123 Westlake Avenue
Weavind Park
Silverton
Pretoria

www.npa.gov.za

TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 14 MARCH 2017

RE: A SENIOR EMPLOYEE SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS FOR FRAUD

The Bellville Specialised Commercial Crimes Court has sentenced Magdalene Sawyer to ten years direct imprisonment after convicting her on 534 counts of fraud. The 53 year old woman agreed yesterday to also cede her pension benefits in the amount of R66 355.17 as partial reimbursement to Coricraft (Pty) Ltd, the complainant she defrauded.

Sawyer entered into a plea and sentencing agreement with the state and has been sentenced to the agreed prison time and financial compensation to the complainant. She admitted to have defrauded the company to a total amount of R1 455 149 22.

The accused was employed as a payroll supervisor and was, as part of her duties, responsible for administering all aspects of the payroll function and integrity of the VIP payroll system as a whole. Due to her position as supervisor in the payroll department, she had a super-user account on VIP which enabled her to make unrestricted system-wide changes and have overall control of the system.

She used her abovementioned super-user account to create fraudulent entries on VIP and to effect changes to bank details on VIP in order to reflect bank accounts belonging to her and her husband, Victor Sawyer. As a result of this action, monies were deposited to Postbank, FNB, and Absa accounts.

After making deposits, the accused would then delete the fraudulent entries and change the bank details of the abovementioned bank accounts held in the name of the accused and Victor Sawyer to the correct bank account numbers, in order to prevent detection. She had full control over the bank accounts including the bank account held by Victor

Sawyer who had no knowledge of the aforementioned payments into the abovementioned bank accounts.

Arguing for this sentence, Senior State Advocate Jannie Knipe said the accused has shown remorse by pleading guilty which has shortened a potential lengthy trial. He said the accused suffered from type 2 diabetes and had bipolar depression. He further argued that there were substantial and compelling circumstances which allowed the court to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentence.

The court sentenced Magdalene Sawyer to the agreed sentence between the parties. It further made an order in terms of section 103 (1) of the Fire Arms Control Act, Act 60 of 2000, that the accused is still regarded as unfit to possess a firearm.

Kind Regards,

Eric Ntabazalila

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Western Cape

Enquiries: entabazalila@npa.gov.za

073 062 1222