

# **Belleville resident pleads guilty to falsifying a record in bankruptcy proceeding**

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**BELLEVILLE** - Dehavalon Cook, age 46, of Belleville, Illinois, pleaded guilty today to falsifying records in a federal bankruptcy proceeding. Cook previously filed a petition for Chapter 13 bankruptcy in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. In March of 2018, Cook doctored a fake letter from the Chapter 13 trustee authorizing him to incur new debt for the purchase of an automobile. The bogus letter included the name and signature of the trustee

Sentencing is scheduled for May 16, 2019. The offense carries a maximum sentence of up to 20 years of imprisonment, three years of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000.

“Forging documents of a trustee is a significant bankruptcy fraud that causes harm and strikes directly at the integrity of the bankruptcy system,” stated Nancy J. Gargula, United States Trustee for Indiana and Southern and Central Illinois (Region 10). “This prosecution reflects the cooperative efforts among several federal law enforcement agencies that work together to combat fraud and abuse in the bankruptcy system.”

The charges resulted from a referral by the U.S. Trustee for Region 10 to the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois. The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in collaboration with the Southern Illinois Bankruptcy Fraud Working Group coordinated by the U.S. Trustee. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Norman R. Smith.