

Former Bookkeeper Sentenced to 63 Months in Prison for Fraud

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BENTON – Paula R. Hise, 55, of Shawneetown, Illinois, was sentenced Monday in United States District Court in Benton to 63 months in prison for defrauding her former employer of over \$1,500,000.00, announced Steven D. Weinhoeft, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois.

Hise had previously pled guilty on April 19, 2021, to an Indictment charging her with two counts of wire fraud.

The information introduced in support of the guilty plea and sentence showed that between 2007 and 2017, Hise used her trusted position as a bookkeeper for her employer to steal funds from her employer by obtaining an unauthorized credit card, using that credit card for personal purchases, and then paying the balance of the credit card using her employer's business checking account. Hise concealed her crime by creating false entries in the business' account ledgers, creating false accounting reports, and providing false information to her employer.

“The FBI is committed to investigating those who commit financial fraud in order to protect American citizens and businesses,” said Special Agent in Charge David Nanz. “This sentence holds Hise accountable for the damage she caused and sends a message that fraud is a serious crime with serious consequences.”

In addition to the 63-month term of imprisonment, Hise was also ordered to pay the United State \$200 in special assessments, and to pay a total of \$1,550,379.14 in restitution to her former employer, less any amounts received from a related civil suit. Hise was also placed on a 3-year term of supervised release to follow her incarceration.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation – Springfield Division.

Assistant United States Attorney Casey E. A. Bloodworth prosecuted the case.