

# **Central Illinois Man Pleads Guilty to Multiple Robbery Charges and Attempted Escap**

January 14 2022 4:48 PM



PEORIA – A Mechanicsburg, Illinois man, John W. Beck, 55, of the 500 block of East Main Street, pleaded guilty on January 12, 2022, to four counts of interference with commerce by robbery, one count of bank robbery, one count of armed bank robbery, and one count of attempted escape from the Livingston County Jail. He is scheduled to be sentenced on May 25, 2022, at the federal courthouse in Peoria, Illinois.

In federal court before U.S. District Judge Joe Billy McDade, Beck admitted to robbing the following businesses and banks:

Dollar General in Buffalo, Illinois, on April 8, 2021

Bank of Pontiac, doing business as Odell Bank, in Odell, Illinois, on April 9, 2021

Fast Stop Store in Odell on April 17, 2021

Village Pantry in Paxton, Illinois, on April 18, 2021

Subway in Danville, Illinois, on April 19, 2021

Elmwood Bank, a division of Morton Community Bank, in Elmwood, Illinois, on April 20, 2021

During the change-of-plea hearing, the government stated that in committing the robberies, Beck used stolen cars, including one stolen from an individual in Mechanicsburg on April 7, 2021; a Green Hyundai from Springfield, Illinois, on April 16, 2021; and a car from Central Illinois Motors in Springfield on April 17, 2021. He also stole license plates from other individuals, which he then used on the stolen cars.

Beck was arrested on the current charges in April 2021 and has remained in the U.S. Marshals' custody. According to court documents, while in custody in September 2021, Beck attempted to escape from the Livingston County Jail, where he was being held.

At the time of his arrest, Beck was on supervised release for a bank robbery he committed in 2007, for which he was sentenced to the Bureau of Prisons for 151 months. He was released from prison in January 2019.

At sentencing, Beck faces up to 20 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and three years of supervised release for each of the four counts of interference with commerce by robbery, as well as the bank robbery of the Bank of Pontiac. He faces up to 25 years' imprisonment and five years of supervised release for the armed robbery of the Elmwood Bank. The attempted escape charge carries a possible penalty of up to five years imprisonment and three years of supervised release.

The investigation was conducted by the Sheriff's Departments in DeWitt, Edgar, Livingston, Peoria, and Sangamon Counties; the Danville, Elmwood, Paxton, and Springfield Police Departments; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the U.S. Marshals Service. Supervisory Assistant U.S. Attorney Darilynn Knauss is representing the government in the prosecution.