

Attorney General Raoul: Edwardsville Woman Sentenced For Forging Restitution Check

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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CHICAGO – Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced an Edwardsville woman - 47-year-old Silk Lumpins - prosecuted by his office was sentenced to three years in prison after violating her probation by committing forgery.

Lumpkins pleaded guilty in July to Class 3 felony state benefits fraud for allegedly omitting income and asset information on her application for the Chicago Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher program.

Attorney General Raoul alleges that Lumpkins, formerly of Chicago, fraudulently obtained more than \$100,000 in benefits from the CHA. She was placed on probation and ordered to pay \$105,762 in restitution to the CHA, with \$20,000 of that due the day she entered her plea.

Raoul said in Cook County Circuit Court this week, Lumpkins admitted to violating her probation by forging the cashier's check she used to pay the \$20,000 in restitution.

"The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides important housing benefits to residents in need, and it is inexcusable that anyone would lie to obtain benefits to which they are not entitled," Raoul said. "To further defraud the CHA by attempting to pay court-ordered restitution with a forged check is a brazen violation.

"I am committed to ensuring that individuals are held accountable for exploiting government programs, particularly when families are waitlisted until the support they deserve is available."

After the CHA deposited Lumpkins' payment, the agency was notified the check was returned. During further investigation, the CHA determined that Lumpkins obtained a cashier's check for \$20 and altered the check to make it appear that it was for \$20,000.

The case was investigated by the CHA Inspector General's office.

"Ms. Lumpkins' brazen and repeated financial crimes show a remarkable disrespect for the law and the judicial system," said Kathryn Richards, Inspector General for the Chicago Housing Authority. "What's more, her crimes deprived those who truly need affordable housing from receiving CHA's limited resources.

"The CHA OIG is grateful to the Attorney General's Office and its Public Integrity Bureau for prosecuting this case and holding Ms. Lumpkins accountable for her crimes."

Assistant Attorney General Haley Bookhout handled the case for Raoul's Public Integrity Bureau.