



# Department of Justice

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Central District of Illinois

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## **RIVERTON WOMAN SENTENCED FOR STEALING FROM DRUG TASK FORCE FUNDS**

Springfield, Ill. – A central Illinois woman, Pamela S. Watts, 45, of Riverton, was sentenced today for embezzling approximately \$43,000 from the Central Illinois Enforcement Group drug task force. U.S. District Judge Sue E. Myerscough ordered that Watts serve one year and a day in federal prison, followed by three years supervised release. Watts was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$42,186.

According to court documents, the Central Illinois Enforcement Group task force was created in 2005 with funds from a federal Justice Assistance Grant. Watts was hired in 2005 as the only task force employee. Among her duties as task force secretary and grant administrator, Watts maintained task force bank accounts, which included writing checks to pay authorized expenses; maintained the task force's Sam's Club account and was responsible for purchasing items; issued and collected credit cards used by task force officers; and submitted invoices to Sangamon County seeking payment of task force expenses from the Justice Assistant Grant.

On Oct 16, 2013, Watts waived indictment and pled guilty to two counts of wire fraud and one count of embezzlement as charged in a criminal information filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office. Watts admitted that she wrote approximately \$19,000 in checks from the task force's court fines account to buy personal items, including food, swimming pool equipment, school supplies, a Sony Play Station, gasoline, and flowers. Further, Watts wrote checks to herself in the amount of approximately \$12,440 from the federal forfeiture account and about \$3,518 from the state forfeiture account. Watts also admitted she used credit cards returned to her by officers no longer assigned to the task force to make more than \$6,000 in personal purchases including concert tickets, ribeye steaks, and merchandise from Victoria Secret, MC Sporting Goods and Penny Lane. Watts further admitted using Central Illinois Enforcement Group task force funds to purchase cellphones for her children and for a laptop computer intended for use by a task force officer.

The charges were investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Illinois State Police and the U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory K. Harris.

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