

U.S. Department of Justice

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District of Connecticut*

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**NORTH BRANFORD WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD AND TAX
OFFENSES STEMMING FROM EMBEZZLEMENT SCHEMES**

John H. Durham, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that MELISSA MEOLE, 35, of North Branford, waived her right to be indicted and pleaded guilty today before U.S. District Judge Victor A. Bolden to fraud and tax offenses stemming from embezzlement schemes.

Pursuant to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), the court proceeding occurred via videoconference.

According to court documents and statements made in court, Meole was employed by Bridgeport Health Care Center Inc. (“BHCC-INC”), a corporation that operates a nursing and rehabilitation facility in Bridgeport known as Bridgeport Health Care Center (“BHCC”). Prior to November 2018, BHCC-INC also operated a second nursing and rehabilitation facility in Bridgeport known as Bridgeport Manor. Meole worked in BHCC-INC’s business office and was responsible for processing payroll and for handling the finances of the Bridgeport Manor resident trust account. From 2015 to October 2018, Meole stole more than \$415,000 by writing checks to cash out of the facilities’ resident trust accounts, which held the personal funds of residents. She then deposited the cash into her bank account. She also stole more than \$29,000 by writing false payroll checks to current and former BHCC employees and then depositing those checks into her bank account by forging the employees’ signatures.

After Meole’s employment with BHCC-INC was terminated in October 2018, Meole defrauded another employer of more than \$9,000 by stealing and fraudulently depositing into her own account certain checks that were returned to the company, often for incorrect addresses. She also defrauded three banks in a check kiting scheme.

For the 2015 through 2018 tax years, Meole failed to report \$487,523 income, most of which was fraudulently obtained, to the Internal Revenue Service, resulting in a tax loss of \$103,217.

Meole pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud, which carries a maximum term of imprisonment of 20 years, and one count of filing a false tax returns, which carries a maximum term of imprisonment of three years. Meole also has agreed to pay restitution of \$456,594.56 to victims of her schemes, and \$103,217, plus interest and penalties, to the IRS. A sentencing date has not been scheduled.

Meole was arrested on a criminal complaint on September 17, 2019. She is released on a \$200,000 bond pending sentencing.

This matter is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor – Employee Benefits Security Administration, Boston Regional Office, Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation Division. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys David E. Novick and Neeraj N. Patel.

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