

PRESS RELEASE

Tewksbury Woman Pleads Guilty to Embezzlement, Unemployment Fraud and Tax Crimes

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – A Tewksbury woman pleaded guilty today in federal court in Boston to embezzling more than \$1.8 million from her employer, collecting unemployment assistance while employed fulltime and related tax charges.

Joanne Dinoto a/k/a Joanne Mara, 48, pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud, three counts of wire fraud, one count of aggravated identity theft and one count of filing a false tax return. U.S. Senior District Court Judge Rya W. Zobel scheduled sentencing for June 29, 2023. Dinoto was indicted by a federal grand jury in November 2021 and subsequently charged in a superseding indictment in March 2022.

Between April 2008 and April 2020, Dinoto stole more than \$1.8 million from her employer, a flooring company based in Acton, by falsely inflating her compensation, using her employer's corporate credit card for personal expenses, and forging at least two checks to herself drawn on her employer's checking account. To hide her scheme, Dinoto modified her employer's accounting records. Dinoto later collected unemployment benefits from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance under her true Social Security number, despite the fact that she was then working full time for a different employer, a lighting company based in Wilmington, under a fake Social Security number. Between 2015 and 2020, Dinoto did not report the more than \$1 million that she embezzled from the Acton company or received from the Wilmington company on her federal income tax returns.

The charge of bank fraud provides for a sentence of up to 30 years in prison, five years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million or twice the gross gain or loss. The charge of wire fraud provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. The charge of filing a false tax return provides for a sentence of up to three years in prison, one year of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of aggravated identity theft provides a mandatory sentence of two years in prison, up to one year of

supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Office; Joleen D. Simpson, Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations in Boston; and Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations made the announcement today. The Acton Police Department and the Middlesex District Attorney's Office also provided valuable assistance. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristen A. Kearney of Rollins' Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit is prosecuting the case.

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