



THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney Dena J. King

United States Attorney's Office
Western District of North Carolina

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**U.S. POSTAL CARRIER AND HUSBAND PLEAD GUILTY
FOR MAIL THEFT SCHEME**

Third Co-Conspirator Pleaded Guilty in March 2023

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – A U.S. Postal Carrier and her husband appeared in federal court today and pleaded guilty to federal charges for conspiring to commit an extensive mail theft scheme, announced Dena J. King, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina. Kiara Padgett, 29, of Waxhaw, N.C., and her spouse, Dominique Dunlap, 28, of Charlotte, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud. Dunlap also pleaded guilty to four counts of possession of stolen mail.

Tommy D. Coke, Inspector in Charge of the Atlanta Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, which oversees Charlotte, Jeff Krafels, Special Agent in Charge of the United States Postal Service, Office of the Inspector General (USPS-OIG) for the Mid-Atlantic Area Field Office (MAAFO), which oversees Charlotte, and Chief Johnny Jennings of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) join U.S. Attorney King in making today's announcement.

According to plea documents, other court filings, and today's court proceedings, Padgett was employed by the U.S. Postal Service as a mail carrier with a postal route in West Charlotte. From August 2021 to November 2022, Padgett used her position as a postal carrier to steal incoming and outgoing checks of businesses and individuals. Court documents show that Padgett sold the stolen checks using Dunlap as her intermediary to other individuals, including to Terrell Alexander Hager, Jr. The total face value of the checks stolen by Padgett was over \$8.8 million.

According to court documents, Dunlap negotiated with Hager, Jr. about the sale of stolen checks over text messages, and sent Hager, Jr. photographs of stacks of stolen mail and of stolen checks of victim companies on Padgett's postal route.

In March 2023, Hager, Jr. pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bank fraud. Court documents filed with the court show that, between August 2021 and November 2022, Hager, Jr. and other individuals obtained stolen checks from Padgett through Dunlap. Hager, Jr. and his co-conspirators deposited the stolen checks into bank accounts they controlled, and then made cash withdrawals before the financial institutions detected the fraud. Over the course of the scheme, Hager, Jr. and his co-conspirators deposited more than \$66,000 in stolen checks and money orders. Hager, Jr. also posted online for sale more than 400 stolen checks totaling over \$7.3 million. The checks posted by Hager, Jr. were stolen from Padgett's postal route in West

Charlotte. At the time Hager, Jr. committed this fraud, he was on probation with the state of North Carolina for an unrelated offense.

At sentencing, Padgett, Dunlap, and Hager, Jr. face a maximum prison term of 30 years and a \$1 million fine for the bank fraud conspiracy charge. Dunlap also faces five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for each of the charges of possession of stolen mail. A sentencing date has not been set.

In making today's announcement, U.S. Attorney King commended the USPIS, USPS-OIG, and CMPD for their investigation of the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jenny G. Sugar of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Charlotte is prosecuting the case.

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