

Department of Justice

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Western District of New York

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BUFFALO WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO BANK FRAUD

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Jayme Smith, 35, of Buffalo, N.Y., pleaded guilty to bank fraud before U.S. District Judge William M. Skretny. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison, a \$1,000,000 fine or both. Under the terms of the plea agreement, the defendant will also be ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$20,100 to the victims of the offense.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric M. Opanga, who handled the case, stated that in early 2011, the defendant executed a scheme to defraud various financial institutions. Smith, with the assistance of other individuals, created approximately \$564,000 worth of counterfeit checks drawn on four separate business accounts held at four different financial institutions. The defendant made these counterfeit checks payable to various individuals across the United States and subsequently mailed the checks to these individuals. All of the checks created were counterfeit and six were successfully negotiated with various financial institutions resulting in losses of over \$20,000. Smith admitted that she purchased check printing software, a printer, and check stock to create the counterfeit checks.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christopher M. Piehota.

Sentencing is scheduled for July 9, 2012, at 9:00 a.m., in Buffalo, N.Y., before Judge Skretny.

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