

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
402 East State Street, Room 430
Trenton, New Jersey 08608



Ralph J. Marra, Jr., Acting U.S. Attorney

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Assistant U.S. Attorney
ERIC M. SCHWEIKER
609-989-0566

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Former Bank Employee Sentenced to 21 Months in Prison for
Embezzling \$357,000 from JP Morgan Chase Bank

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

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TRENTON – A former assistant bank branch manager employed with JP Morgan Chase Bank, N.A. was sentenced today to 21 months in federal prison for embezzling more than \$357,000 from her employer, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., announced.

U.S. District Judge Mary L. Cooper also ordered Michelle Andrej-Byrne, 45, of Trenton, to pay \$357,283 in restitution and to serve five years of supervised release upon the completion of her prison term. Judge Cooper continued the defendant's release on a \$50,000 unsecured bond, pending her surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons by Dec. 3.

Andrej-Byrne pleaded guilty before Judge Cooper on March 13 to a one-count Information that charges her with embezzlement from a federally insured bank. At her plea hearing, Andrej-Byrne admitted that between December 2006 and August 2008, she used her employment as an assistant branch manager at a JP Morgan bank branch in Ewing to steal the money. Andrej-Byrne admitted that she did so by manipulating transactions between her cash box and teller cash dispensers at the branch.

Andrej-Byrne admitted she took a total of approximately \$320,900 from the teller cash dispensers. In addition, Andrej-Byrne admitted that, on Aug. 6, 2008, when it became apparent that her illegal conduct would come to light, she stole approximately \$36,717 from the bank's vault and her cash drawer for her own use.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Cooper consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, with the investigation leading to today's sentencing.

The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Eric M. Schweiker, of the U.S. Attorney's Criminal Division in Trenton.

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Defense Attorney: Robin E. Echevarria, Esq. Princeton Junction