



Department of Justice

Carlton S. Shier, IV
Acting United States Attorney
Eastern District of Kentucky

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, March 29, 2022
www.usdoj.gov/usao/kye

CONTACT: Gabrielle Dudgeon
PHONE: (859) 685-4887
E-MAIL: gabrielle.dudgeon@usdoj.gov

Former Lawrence County Attorney Pleads Guilty to Wire Fraud and Federal Program Theft

FRANKFORT, Ky. – The former County Attorney for Lawrence County, Michael T. Hogan, and his wife and legal secretary, Joy M. Hogan, 41, pleaded guilty on Tuesday, before U.S. District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove, to wire fraud. Michael Hogan pleaded guilty also to federal program theft.

According to the Hogans' plea agreements, the Hogans conspired with each other to commit wire fraud by issuing checks from a second delinquent tax account for the Lawrence County Attorney's Office, the statements for which went to their personal residence. Michael Hogan and Joy Hogan would routinely prepare "bonus" checks issued to Joy, and signed by Michael, paid with delinquent tax funds that should have been used on operating expenses for the Lawrence County Attorney's Office. The Hogans deposited these checks in Joy's personal account and the couple's joint accounts and spent the funds on personal expenses. Michael Hogan admitted he personally benefitted from these payments and knew some of these payments were not reasonable in amount, nor beneficial to the public. According to the indictment, between March 8, 2013, and April 30, 2020, Michael Hogan paid Joy Hogan more than \$365,000 from the Lawrence County Delinquent Tax Account.

Additionally, Michael Hogan also admitted to defrauding the Lawrence County Child Support Enforcement Office, part of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. According to the plea agreement, Hogan billed the program for more hours than he actually worked.

As part of the plea agreement, Michael Hogan agreed to resign as the Lawrence County Attorney.

The Hogans were indicted on the charges in June 2021.

"Whenever public officials turn to self-interests and use taxpayer money for their personal benefit, it causes real damage," said Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky. "Mr. Hogan was an elected County Attorney – responsible for upholding the law – yet, he has now admitted to betraying that public trust and to taking a significant amount of public money for the benefit of he and his wife. Not only was this conduct a theft of public funds, but it also dangerously erodes the public's faith in government officials and law enforcement. We appreciate the efforts of our dedicated law enforcement partners, without

whom this prosecution would not have been possible.”

"The Hogans' blatant disregard for properly handling tax payers' hard-earned money eroded the public's trust in government," said Special Agent in Charge Jodi Cohen of the FBI's Louisville Field Office. "The FBI will continue to work alongside our law enforcement partners to regain that trust by identifying and investigating those in power who choose to put their own financial gain above those they serve."

United States Attorney Shier; Special Agent in Charge Cohen; and Colonel Phillip Burnett, Commissioner of the Kentucky State Police, jointly announced the guilty plea.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI and KSP. The case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kate Smith and James Chapman.

Michael Hogan and Joy Hogan are scheduled to be sentenced on July 6. On the wire fraud charges, they face up to 20 years in prison and a fine of no more than \$250,000 or twice the amount of gain or loss. On the federal program theft charges, Michael Hogan faces up to 10 years in prison and a fine of no more than \$250,000. However, any sentence following a conviction would be imposed by the Court, after its consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal sentencing statutes.

— END —