

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



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AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF FORMER FUND CUSTODIAN FOR THEFT FROM DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

(MONTGOMERY)— Attorney General Luther Strange today announced the conviction of a former fund custodian for the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for the theft of \$339,314 from the agency's local Birmingham office. Erica Fredrose Johnson, 39, of Birmingham, pleaded guilty in Jefferson County Circuit Court on Monday to first-degree theft of property.

Johnson was sentenced to 32 months, which was suspended for a term of five years supervised probation, and ordered to pay \$75,000 in restitution to the Birmingham Rehabilitation Revolving Fund and \$263,514 to the agency's insurance company, Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland Insurance. Previously, Johnson had repaid \$800 to the insurance company.

"This woman not only betrayed the citizens of Alabama, by whom she was employed and whose money she stole, but she also exploited those in need that the Birmingham Rehabilitation Revolving Fund was meant to serve," said Attorney General Strange. "I am pleased that Erica Fredrose Johnson has been held to account for her crime and that the money is being repaid."

The defendant was employed as the fund custodian from 2005 until her resignation in 2012. During this time, she wrote a total of 280 checks from the revolving fund to pay personal accounts as well as to provide money to her family and friends. When she received bank statements which contained the images of checks written from the fund's account she would alter the check images to give the appearance that the check was written to a legitimate creditor.

The Attorney General's Criminal Trials Division presented evidence to a Jefferson County grand jury, resulting in Johnson's indictment in December of 2013. Attorney General Strange commended Assistant Attorney General Ternisha Miles and thanked the Alabama Bureau of Investigation.

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