



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Office of the District Attorney
Twelfth Judicial District

Scot D. Key
District Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2022

**MARION LEDFORD SENTENCED TO 24 YEARS INCARCERATION FOR
EMBEZZLEMENT AND TAX FRAUD**

Twelfth Judicial District Attorney, Scot D. Key, announces that a Change of Plea and Sentencing was completed on Defendant, Marion Ledford, age 68, of Alamogordo, New Mexico. On March 24, 2022, Ledford pled No Contest to one count of Embezzlement (over \$20,000) and three counts of Tax Fraud (Makes or Subscribes) (over \$2,500 - \$20,000).

Ledford was the former CFO/CPA director of the Robert W. Hamilton Foundation (RWH Foundation) in Alamogordo, NM. The RWH Foundation is a private independent non-profit organization that provides scholarships to local high school graduates in Otero County.

From the years 2011 through 2016, whilst Ledford served the organization in his capacity, he embezzled a total of \$1,808,100.00. All of which, he made payable checks to himself from the RWH Foundation accounts. Ledford admitted to controlling the finances of the foundation with no oversight and was able to carry on this pattern for at least five years, from 2011 to 2016.

Prior to Ledford's most recent plea and sentencing with the State of New Mexico, he pled guilty to Tax Evasion in November 2019 in Federal Court regarding Tax Evasion arising out of the Embezzlement in this case. As a result of this guilty plea, Ledford was sentenced to 18 months incarceration on February 14, 2022. He will serve that sentence beginning April 16, 2022, in a federal facility in Big Springs, Texas. Additionally, he was ordered to pay the total principal amount of \$2,414,589.00, which includes restitution to the Robert W. Hamilton Foundation in the amount of \$1,785,300.00, and restitution to the Internal Revenue Service in the amount of \$629,289.00.

After Ledford pled guilty in Federal Court in November of 2019, the Twelfth Judicial District Attorney's Office pursued charges of Embezzlement and Tax Fraud on the State level.

The investigation launched and was led by the New Mexico State Police Department and the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department Tax Fraud Investigations Division. The division investigated the embezzlement from 2010 through 2016 of unauthorized withdrawals from financial accounts belonging to the Robert W. Hamilton Foundation. Additionally, they investigated Ledford for three calendar year tax filing periods from 2014 through 2016 regarding his State of New Mexico Income Tax.

The investigation revealed Ledford made 69 unauthorized withdrawals from RHF's bank accounts and financial institutions, and made deposits into bank accounts belonging to himself,

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totaling \$1,808,100.00. In turn, Ledford failed to report the additional income earned from the embezzlement activity for each corresponding tax years 2014, 2015, and 2016. Ledford failed to file a true and correct New Mexico Personal Income Tax for tax years, 2014, 2015, and 2016, which resulted in a tax due and owing of \$40,993.00.

The Honorable Judge, Steven Blankinship, sentenced Marion Ledford to 24 years incarceration, with no probation, to be served concurrent with his 18-month Federal Sentence. This sentence represents the maximum punishment provided by law. After the Defendant finishes his Federal Sentence, he will be extradited to New Mexico to serve the remainder of the 24 years. Ledford was also ordered to pay restitution to the Robert W. Hamilton Foundation, in addition to payment of restitution to the Internal Revenue Service that the Court found regarding the frequency and duration of his embezzling acts.

Ledford's case was investigated by the New Mexico State Police, New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department Tax Fraud Investigations Division, and Twelfth Judicial District Attorney Investigators. This matter was prosecuted by Senior Trial Attorney, Brannon A. Jordan.

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