

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Michigan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, September 27, 2021

Former Treasurer of the Detroit Fire Department Union Charged with Stealing Over \$220,000 in Union Funds

DETROIT - The former Treasurer of the Detroit Fire Department Union (DFFA) has been charged in a federal criminal complaint with embezzling over \$220,000 in union funds, announced Acting United States Attorney Saima Mohsin.

Joining Mohsin in the announcement were Timothy Waters, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

Verdine Day, age 62, is scheduled to appear in federal court this afternoon in connection with a federal criminal complaint charging her with bank fraud and wire fraud. The affidavit supporting the complaint states that Day was hired by the Detroit Fire Department in 1986. She worked as a firefighter, engineer, and held other positions in the union before she was elected by her peers to Treasurer of the DFFA in November 2015. She was Treasurer from December 2015 until her retirement from the DFFA and the City of Detroit in September 2019.

The affidavit further states that during the four years Day was Treasurer of the DFFA, she fraudulently obtained approximately \$167,900.00 of union funds by (1) issuing checks in her name and then changing the name of the payee in the Union's Quickbooks software (2) cashing checks which were voided by her in Quickbooks and (3) writing checks made payable to cash.

Day also used DFFA credit cards as her own personal credit cards while she was Treasurer and after she retired. In total, she charged approximately \$52,143.65 in personal expenses using DFFA credit cards. Her purchases on DFFA credit cards included flights, hotel rooms, cruises, car insurance premiums, satellite and cable TV service, national and state parks fees, and furniture. For example, Day used a DFFA union credit card to charge \$9,553 for a cruise with Royal Caribbean cruise lines in 2017. Day also used a union credit card to pay for another Royal Caribbean cruise costing \$8,975 on the Liberty of the Seas in 2019. She used the union's credit card to pay her bar bill at a casino in Ohio in May 2019 and for a meal at a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. restaurant in Cozumel, Mexico in 2019.

Acting U.S. Attorney Saima Mohsin commended the work of the FBI and the Department of Labor in conducting this criminal investigation of a corrupt union officer and said, "This prosecution demonstrates that we will not tolerate union officers who abuse their authority and line their own pockets at the expense of the union's membership. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to root out corruption and fraud involving unions."

"Union officials are expected to serve with integrity, particularly when they are sworn to represent men and women who put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities," said Timothy Waters, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Detroit Division. "When a union official violates their position of trust, the FBI will continue to aggressively investigate these matters to ensure individuals are held accountable for their actions."

“An important mission of the Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of fraud involving labor unions. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate these types of allegations,” said Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sarah Resnick Cohen. The investigation of this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Labor.

A complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Trial cannot be held on felony charges in a complaint. Day is facing a maximum of 30 years in prison on the bank fraud charge and up to 20 years in prison on the wire fraud charge.

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