

PRESS RELEASE

Tewksbury Woman Sentenced to More Than Five Years in Prison for Embezzlement, Unemployment Fraud and Tax Crimes

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – A Tewksbury woman was sentenced yesterday in federal court in Boston for embezzling more than \$1.8 million from her employer, collecting unemployment assistance while employed fulltime and related tax charges.

Joanne Dinoto a/k/a Joanne Mara, 49, was sentenced by U.S. Senior District Court Judge Denise J. Casper to 62 months in prison and three years of supervised release. Dinoto was also ordered to pay restitution of \$2,195,592. In March 2023, Dinoto pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud, three counts of wire fraud, one count of aggravated identity theft and one count of filing a false tax return.

Beginning no later than October 2008 and continuing through April 2020, Dinoto stole more than \$1.8 million from her employer, a flooring company based in Acton, by falsely inflating her compensation, using her employer's corporate credit card for personal expenses, and forging at least two checks to herself drawn on her employer's checking account. To hide her scheme, Dinoto modified her employer's accounting records. Dinoto later collected unemployment benefits from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance under her true Social Security number, even though she was then working full time for a different employer, a lighting company based in Wilmington, under a fake Social Security number. Between 2015 and 2020, Dinoto did

not report more than \$1 million that she embezzled from the Acton company or received from the Wilmington company on her federal income tax returns.

Acting United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy; Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Office; Harry Chavis, Jr., Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations in Boston; and Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations made the announcement today. The Acton Police Department and the Middlesex District Attorney's Office also provided valuable assistance. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristen A. Kearney of the Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit prosecuted the case.

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