



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 24, 2011

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc/Press_Releases/index.html

D.C. Woman Pleads Guilty to Embezzling Social Security Checks

WASHINGTON - Shara Curtis, 46, of Bennett Place, N.E., pled guilty today to the federal charge of embezzlement of public money, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., and Special Agent in Charge Michael McGill of the Social Security Administration, Philadelphia Field Division. Curtis entered her guilty plea in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The Honorable Judge Robert L. Wilkins scheduled sentencing for July 6, 2011.

According to the factual proffer presented to the Court, in 2004, Ms. Curtis became the representative payee for MP, who was entitled to Social Security benefits. Accordingly, United States Treasury checks were made payable to "Shara D. Curtis For [MP]" and sent to the address of Ms. Curtis in Washington, D.C. Ms. Curtis was responsible to use the money from these checks for the benefit of MP.

In August 2005, MP was incarcerated for a crime, thus making him ineligible for Social Security benefits. Beginning in August 2005 and ending with a check dated September 1, 2009, Ms. Curtis continued to cash Treasury checks sent to her for the benefit of MP. The total amount embezzled from these checks was \$30,738. A stimulus rebate check for \$250 also was embezzled. Ms. Curtis spent the money from cashing the checks on items for her benefit, such as paying her rent and utilities.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen and Special Agent in Charge McGill praised the outstanding work of Special Agent Matthew Deuchler of the Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General who investigated on the case. They also acknowledged the assistance of Paralegal Specialist Mary Treanor and Assistant United States Attorney Thomas E. Zeno, who prosecuted this case.

###