



NEWS RELEASE –

May 24, 2018

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**2nd RINGLEADER IN STOLEN MAIL/COUNTERFEIT CHECKS/DRUG RING SENTENCED
Co-defendants previously pleaded guilty to various charges and sentenced**

The other ringleader of a stolen mail/counterfeit checks/drugs ring operating in the Denver area indicted last year by a Denver Grand Jury was sentenced today in Denver District Court.

Kathleen Cooke (dob: 04-27-1969) pleaded guilty in April to the main count of violation of the *Colorado Organized Crime Control Act-COCCA* (F2), and to one count of *ID theft* (F4) and was sentenced to eight and four years in prison, respectively, the sentences to run consecutively for a total of 12 years in prison. Restitution will also be ordered at a later date.

As previously announced, fellow COCCA defendant **Sean Jones** was sentenced in March to 14 years in prison, to run consecutively to all other cases for which he is serving; co-defendant **Alan Mill** was sentenced in February to 22 years in prison; and the eight other co-defendants have variously pleaded guilty to felony identity theft or forgery and added counts of misdemeanor theft, and sentenced to county jail sentences, community corrections, suspended prison sentences upon condition of successful completion of probation, or deferred judgments concurrent with probation, and/or ordered to pay varying amounts of restitution.

In addition to the *COCCA* charge, Cooke, Jones and the other defendants were variously charged with multiple counts of other felonies in a 186-count May 2017 indictment after a months-long investigation and collaboration by the Denver District Attorney's Economic Crime Unit, Denver Police Department, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Colorado Bureau of Investigation, Black Hawk Police Department, FBI Rocky Mountain Safe Streets Task Force, Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office and Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.

The indictment charged that beginning in April 2016 Jones and Cooke led a criminal racketeering enterprise to steal mail (aka "schwack" in street slang) containing identifying information and personal and business checks, used victims' identities and altered, made and distributed stolen and/or counterfeit checks, using computers, computer programs, forgery devices and other tools to generate the counterfeit and/or altered checks, which checks were then cashed or attempted to be cashed at numerous banks and credit unions in the Denver area. The defendants bought, sold, traded and bartered among each other the stolen personal and financial information and checks in exchange for drugs, mostly methamphetamine and heroin, and also bought, sold and traded the drugs among themselves.

The defendants collectively stole more than \$100,000 while committing ID theft, forgery, and theft at financial institutions, utilizing the stolen personal and financial information and/or financial devices of more than 400 people and business entities.