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[HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [MEET THE U.S. ATTORNEY](#) [DIVISIONS](#) [PROGRAMS](#) [CAREERS](#) [CONTACT US](#)

[Home](#) » [News](#) » [Press Release](#)



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BRIEFING ROOM

WOMAN CONVICTED OF FRAUD, UTTERING FORGED SECURITIES

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2011

BOSTON, Mass. - A Quincy woman was convicted late yesterday in federal court of mail fraud, wire fraud, and uttering forged securities, charges which arose from her scheme to embezzle several hundred thousand dollars from multiple area dentists.

PHUONG NGUYEN, a/k/a "Lisa", 32, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge George A. O'Toole Jr. to three counts of uttering a forged security, one count of mail fraud, and one count of wire fraud.

Had the case proceeded to trial the Government's evidence would have proven that beginning in approximately 2006, NGUYEN embezzled several hundred thousand dollars from four local area dental practices. To execute the scheme, NGUYEN obtained employment as an office manager or front desk manager at the dental practices. These jobs put NGUYEN in a position to generate insurance claims from these offices and submit those claims to private insurance carriers. NGUYEN was also in position to open incoming mail and intercept reimbursement checks and notices of denied claims from insurance carriers. NGUYEN executed her scheme by, among other deceptive practices, intercepting incoming checks, forging the doctor's endorsement on the back of the checks, and depositing the checks into bank accounts that she controlled. In instances where NGUYEN had access to the business check book, NGUYEN forged signatures on checks, making them payable to herself or to cash. NGUYEN then forged the doctor's signature on the back of the checks and either cashed the checks or deposited them into bank accounts she controlled.

NGUYEN's scheme followed a cyclical pattern. Typically, NGUYEN would begin embezzling money in the manner described above shortly after obtaining employment as an office manager or front desk manager at a dental practice. After being terminated – in some cases as a result of the discovery of her embezzlement – NGUYEN would seek employment at a new dental practice, where the cycle would begin again.

Judge O'Toole scheduled sentencing for September 13, 2011. Under the terms of her plea agreement, NGUYEN faces up to 51 months in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release, a fine of up to \$75,000, and restitution.

United States Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz; Robert Bethel, Inspector in Charge of the United States Postal Inspection Service - Boston Division; Anthony DiPaolo, Chief of Investigations of the Massachusetts Insurance Fraud Bureau; Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley, and Norfolk County District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey made the announcement today. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Todd F. Braunstein of Ortiz's Economic Crimes Unit.

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[Return to Top](#)

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS
1 Courthouse Way, John Joseph Moakley Courthouse - Boston, MA 02110

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En Espanol		Priorities	Civil Division Criminal Division Administrative Division	Anti-Terrorism/National Security Civil Rights Child Exploitation Enforcement Coordination/Outreach Drug/Violent		Business Opportunities

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