



Mail Theft by a Postal Employee, and more... see what happened this past week in the Eastern District of Louisiana

CASE SPOTLIGHT

United States v. Florence 25-cr-033

What's the Basis?: In late 2022, the United States Postal Service ("USPS"), Office of Inspector General ("OIG") noticed mail that had been tampered with. OIG set up surveillance in January 2023. At that time, they noticed Florence "rifling through and hand sorting" mail that should have been automatically processed by USPS machines. As surveillance continued, OIG witnessed additional suspicious activity. A decision was made to conduct a search of Florence, whereupon an Amazon gift card was found within her waistband, and \$20 in her shirt pocket. A search of her work area revealed additional gift cards and \$367 in her purse. Florence admitted that all of these items came from mail she opened and admitted to opening approximately four to five greeting cards per day.

What's the Violation?: Florence pled guilty to *Mail Theft by a Postal Employee* in violation of **18 U.S.C. §1709**.

What's the Punishment?: The Honorable Judge Wendy B. Vitter sentenced Florence to **4 years of probation**.

This Week's Other Matters

U.S. V. PARAMO-BARBAS, 25-CR-024

Charge: Misuse of a Social Security Number
(42 U.S.C. § 408(a)(7)(B))
Sentence: **TIME SERVED.**
Judge: Honorable Sarah S. Vance

U.S. V. FAGARAS, 25-CR-022

Charge: Access Device Fraud
(18 U.S.C. §§ 2 and 1029(a)(4))
Sentence: **TIME SERVED.**
Judge: Honorable Wendy B. Vitter

U.S. V. CASTILLO-BONILLA, 25-CR-186

Charge: Reentry of Previously Removed Alien
(8 U.S.C. § 1326(a))
Sentence: 8 months of imprisonment and 1 year of supervised release.
Judge: Honorable Lance M. Africk

WHAT'S THAT STATUTE?

CLICK ON THE LINKS BELOW FOR MORE
DETAILS ON THE VIOLATIONS INCLUDED IN
THIS WEEKS' EDITION

- [8 U.S.C. § 1326](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 2](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 922](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 924](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 1029](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 1709](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 2119](#)
- [18 U.S.C. § 2252](#)
- [21 U.S.C. § 841](#)
- [21 U.S.C. § 846](#)
- [42 U.S.C. § 408](#)



U.S. V. JOHNSON, 22-CR-110

Charge: Motor Vehicle Theft-Carjacking and Felon in Possession of Firearm

(18 U.S.C. § 2119(2); 922(g)(1); and 924(a)(2))

Sentence: **132 months of imprisonment** as to the Carjacking charge and **120 months of imprisonment** as to the Firearm charge. Sentences to be ran concurrently.

Judge: Honorable Darrel J. Papillion

**U.S. V. BERRY, 24-CR-225**

Charge: Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with Intent to Distribute 50 Grams or More of Methamphetamine; Use of a Communication Facility; Possess with Intent to Distribute 50 Grams or More of Methamphetamine (21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(A); 846; 18 U.S.C. §§ 2, 922(g)(1) and 924(a)(8))

Sentence: **60 months of imprisonment** (60 months as to the controlled substance charges and 48 months as to the communication facility charges - all to be served concurrently). A total of 4 years of supervised release.

Judge: Honorable Barry W. Ashe

U.S. V. HOWARD, 24-CR-134

Charge: Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine; Attempted Possession with the Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine; Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine; Felon in Possession of Firearm

(21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(A); 846; 18 U.S.C. §§ 2, 922(g)(1) and 924(a)(8))

Sentence: **160 months of imprisonment** (160 months as to the controlled substance charges and 120 months as to the firearm charges - all to be served concurrently). A total of 5 years of supervised release.

Judge: Honorable Wendy B. Vitter

Did You Know?

According to the United States Postal Service (USPS) Office of Inspector General (OIG), more than **58 million packages were stolen in transit during 2024**, resulting in **estimated losses of up to \$16 billion**. **Approximately 25% of American e-commerce consumers have been affected by package theft.**

These figures include cases involving USPS employees, like today's Case Spotlight, as well as external individuals and other delivery agencies. OIG reports a **40% increase in USPS employee theft cases from 2019 to 2023, rising from just under 1,300 cases in 2019 to about 1,800 in 2023**. Frank Albergo, President of the Postal Police Officers Association, attributes this surge to criminal organizations and gangs recruiting individuals to join the postal service to steal mail and drain bank accounts.

Hebrews 13:3 - Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated - since you yourselves are in the body also.

Heed His word and pray for the detained, incarcerated, and less fortunate among us.