



Office of Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton

PRESS RELEASE

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MALL SECURITY GUARD CONVICTED OF FELONY FOR STEALING CUSTOMER'S MONEY

FLINT -- Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton said a jury convicted a 35-year-old security guard yesterday for stealing money from a customer's wallet.

According to police reports and trial evidence, Eddie Lee Woods, 35 (d.o.b. 7/26/1977) of Flint, was working in loss prevention for Burlington Coat Factory at the Genesee Valley Mall in Flint Township on July 23, 2012 when a customer left her wallet at the cash register after purchasing merchandise. Video footage from store surveillance cameras showed the cashier taking the wallet to the loss prevention office and giving it to Woods.

Further footage from the store video showed Woods grabbing a hat from a merchandise display after exiting the loss prevention office and holding it over his chest. Prosecutors argued that the video captured Woods hiding the wallet as he walked through the store and toward a public trash can which he then leaned over and into which he dropped the wallet. Prior to dropping the wallet into the trash can, evidence indicated Woods took \$300 in cash from the customer's wallet.

Portions of the surveillance video had been erased including times when the cashier and Woods were communicating and while Woods and the cashier were in the loss prevention office together. Prosecutors argued Woods purposely erased portions of the video in an attempt to cover up his actions.

During his initial interview with Flint Township police officers who were investigating the incident, Woods denied taking the customer's money and stated he would never do that because it was his job to put people in jail for such things.

"This man was supposed to be protecting store property and employees as well as the safety and property of customers," said Prosecutor Leyton. "Instead, he took advantage of a customer's mistake and exploited it for his own benefit," he said.

"This case demonstrates that no case is too small to be fully prosecuted all the way to a trial, if necessary, to achieve justice for victims," he said.

Woods was convicted of Larceny in a Building which carries a possible sentence of up to four years in prison. He is scheduled to be sentenced in Genesee County Circuit Court on April 11, 2013.

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