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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MIDDLETON MAN SENTENCED FOR THEFT OF
\$230,000 FROM OPM FUNDS AND FILING FALSE TAX RETURNS**

GREENBELT, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that John Williams, age 57, of Middleton, Maryland, was sentenced today by the Honorable Peter J. Messitte to 15 months imprisonment and ordered to pay restitution to the United States, after pleading guilty on February 11, 2003 to six counts of theft of government property and three counts of presenting false claims to the United States in the form of false tax returns that sought tax refunds.

In a statement of facts provided to the court as part of the earlier plea agreement, Williams admitted that his father was an employee of the United States. When he died, Williams' mother, Sylvia Williams, became entitled to survivor benefits paid by the Office of Personnel Management. In July 1989, Sylvia Williams died, terminating her entitlement to the survivor benefits. Williams did not inform the United States of her death and continued to receive and deposit annuity payment checks issued to his mother. In or about August 1998, Williams converted these payments to an electronic funds transfer deposited directly to his bank account. He used the funds for personal

expenses such as the payment of his monthly mortgage. Williams continued to accept payments until July 1999 when he notified OPM that his mother had died. In doing so, however, he advised OPM that her date of death was July 9, 1999. In fact, the actual date of death was July 9, 1989-- exactly ten years earlier. Williams received \$230,904.46 from OPM after his mother's death.

Additionally, for tax years 1996 through 1999, Williams filed tax returns in the name of Sylvia Williams, reporting the annuity payments under her social security number. In each case, he subscribed the 1040 return at the end, either signing the name "Sylvia Williams" or signing his own name as "Attorney in Fact." He received fraudulent refunds as a result of these returns.

The case was the result of a two-year investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Office of Personnel Management, Office of Inspector General. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronald J. Tenpas.