



Department of Justice

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FISHERS WOMAN SENTENCED TO 24 MONTH IMPRISONMENT FOR FILING 47 FALSE TAX RETURNS

PRESS RELEASE

Timothy M. Morrison, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that LORI A. CRISP, 44, Fishers, Indiana, was sentenced to 24 months imprisonment late yesterday by U.S. District Court Chief Judge David F. Hamilton, following her guilty plea to filing false claims against the government. This case was the result of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division.

CRISP was an income tax return preparer, employed by H&R Block from 2001 thru 2006. During 2005 and 2006, CRISP worked as the office manager of an H&R Block office in Indianapolis. CRISP worked both as a return preparer and as the manager of other return preparers.

During the year 2005, CRISP prepared and electronically filed 47 false claims for refund of federal income taxes (ie, 2004 Forms 1040), all in the names of other individuals. Each of the returns included fraudulent Forms W-2 and claimed fictitious withholdings. Of the 47 returns, 46 showed the exact same amount of wages (\$32,289.00) with varying amounts of fictitious withholdings. Of the 47 false returns, 36 also claimed fraudulent education credits. The total amount of the claimed refunds on the 47 returns was \$218,379.00.

CRISP prepared only three of the returns using her own employee identification number with H&R Block. After preparing the other 44 returns, but prior to electronically remitting them to the IRS, she changed the paid preparer section of each return to reflect another return preparer's identity, in order to conceal her offense. These other preparers were all H&R Block office staff whom she supervised.

Each of the returns requested a refund anticipation loan (RAL). A total of eight RAL's, totaling \$34,157.35 were actually issued (and the checks cashed). The IRS detected the scheme before the remaining RALs were issued. After preparing and filing the returns, CRISP shredded the H&R Block files for these returns, in order to further conceal her offense. Then, when the IRS attempted to obtain the files from H&R Block during the investigation, none of those files were available.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Susan Heckard Dowd, who prosecuted the case for the government, Hamilton also imposed 3 years supervised release following CRISP's release from imprisonment. CRISP was also ordered to make restitution in the amount of \$33,777.35.

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