



Centra Credit Union Manager Stole \$350,000 From Elderly Customers

Teresa Palmer targeted members who couldn't monitor accounts, used stolen money for gambling

Teresa Palmer knew which customers she could defraud. As branch manager of a Centra Credit Union branch in Indianapolis, she had access to account information that showed her which members were elderly and rarely checked their balances.

Prosecutors say that for two years, she systematically stole from vulnerable customers, withdrawing more than \$350,000 through fake transactions and forged cashier's checks. She spent the money on personal expenses, including gambling.

“As the branch manager, Palmer knew which Credit Union customers were elderly and unable to regularly monitor their accounts,” the indictment alleges. “Palmer targeted these accounts for her scheme.”

A federal grand jury indicted Palmer last month on four counts of bank fraud. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and a \$1 million fine.

She Worked As Branch Manager

Palmer worked as a branch manager at Centra Credit Union's Indianapolis location on North Shadeland Avenue from 2014 until December 2022, according to court documents filed in the Southern District of Indiana. The scheme began around January 7, 2021, and continued until December 9, 2022.



Court records show Palmer used her position to authorize hundreds of unauthorized transactions. She had two main methods for stealing the money.

- First, she would withdraw cash directly from customer accounts without their knowledge or permission. She used her bank computer and Centra's software to process these transactions as if they were legitimate withdrawals.
- Second, she created fraudulent cashier's checks drawn from customer accounts. She would forge the signature of the supposed recipient on the back of the check, then either cash it herself or direct other Centra employees to cash it. She told the employees that the customer had asked her to process the transaction.

Victims And Losses

The indictment details four specific instances of fraud that prosecutors will use as examples in court. These cases alone total \$19,850 stolen from two victims.

On December 29, 2021, Palmer created a fraudulent cashier's check for \$5,000 from one customer's account. Six months later, on June 11, 2022, she withdrew \$5,500 in cash from the same victim's account.

Palmer also targeted a second customer twice. She created a \$3,100 cashier's check from that person's account on November 26, 2022. Less than two weeks later, on December 9, 2022, she made another fraudulent cashier's check for \$6,250 from the same account.

Centra Credit Union Issued A Statement

Centra Credit Union responded to the news with a statement.

“At Centra, our top priority is our members,” the statement said. “When we uncovered a situation in which a former team member was suspected of taking advantage of the trust some members placed in them, we immediately took steps to address the issue. The team member is no longer with the organization, and we are actively working with the FBI on an ongoing investigation. Our impacted members are aware of the situation and have not incurred any losses. We will continue to practice the strong internal controls that helped us identify this situation.”

She Used The Money For Personal Expenses And Gambling

Investigators say that Palmer used the stolen funds for personal expenses, including gambling. The indictment doesn't say how much she spent on gambling or where she gambled.

Palmer kept all the cash for herself after converting the fraudulent cashier's checks, according to the charges. None of the money was returned to customer accounts or used for legitimate business purposes which will be key in the trial.

Read The Indictment

FILED

JUL 22 2025

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA
INDIANAPOLIS DIVISION

U.S. CLERK'S OFFICE
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
V.)
)
TERESA PALMER,)
)
Defendant.)

CAUSE NO. 1:25-cr-00152-SEB-MJD

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury charges that:

General Allegations

At times material to this Indictment:

1. Credit Union 1 is a financial institution with its headquarters in the Southern District of Indiana and branches located throughout Indiana. The deposits of Credit Union 1 are insured by the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund.
2. Starting in or around 2014 until December 2022, TERESA PALMER was a branch manager at a Credit Union 1 branch in Indianapolis. As part of her job responsibilities, PALMER would manage Credit Union employees, and assist customers with their banking needs, including accessing funds from the customers' accounts.
3. During this time, PALMER had access to the accounts of Credit Union 1's customers. If a customer authorized PALMER to withdraw funds from that customer's account, then PALMER could withdraw funds from the account in the form of cash or create a cashier's check with the customer's funds. PALMER did not have permission to take money from

customers' accounts without the knowledge, consent, or authorization of those customers or their designated representative.

The Scheme to Defraud

4. Beginning on a date unknown but at least as early as on or about January 7, 2021, and continuing until as late as on or about December 9, 2022, PALMER devised and executed a scheme to obtain any of the moneys under the custody or control of Credit Union 1 by means of false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises, as further described below (the "Scheme").

5. The objective of the Scheme was for PALMER to enrich herself by obtaining money belonging to Credit Union 1's customers for her own personal use without the knowledge, consent, or authorization of those customers or their designated representatives.

6. As the branch manager, PALMER knew which Credit Union 1 customers were elderly and unable to regularly monitor their accounts. PALMER targeted these accounts for her Scheme.

7. As part of the Scheme, PALMER used her bank computer and the banking software available to her as a Credit Union 1 branch manager to authorize withdrawals of cash from Credit Union 1 customers' accounts. PALMER withdrew the money from the customers' accounts without their knowledge, consent, or authorization. PALMER would keep this cash for her

personal use.

8. As part of the Scheme, PALMER also fraudulently authorized the issuance of cashier's checks from customers' accounts that were made payable to others. PALMER forged the signature of the purported recipient on the back of the check. PALMER then cashed the check, or she directed employees at Credit Union 1 to cash the cashier's check, falsely representing that the recipient asked her to cash the cashier's check. PALMER created these cashier's checks and cashed them without the customers' knowledge, consent, or authorization. Once the cashier's check was converted into cash, PALMER kept the cash for her personal use.

9. As part of the Scheme, PALMER made hundreds of unapproved transactions on customer accounts. In total, PALMER withdrew more than \$350,000 from Credit Union 1's customers' accounts without the customers' knowledge, consent, or authorization. PALMER used these funds on personal expenses, including gambling.

COUNTS 1-4
Bank Fraud
18 U.S.C. § 1344(2)

10. Paragraphs 1 through 9 are incorporated by reference.

11. On or about the dates described in the chart below, within the Southern District of Indiana and elsewhere, TERESA PALMER, the Defendant herein, did knowingly execute a scheme or artifice to obtain any of the monies, funds, credits, assets, securities, and other property owned by, and under the custody or control of, the financial institution, by means of false and

fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises; to wit, PALMER withdrew money from the accounts of Credit Union 1's customers through cash withdrawals and the creation of cashier's checks without the knowledge, consent, or authorization of the customers, as listed in each Count listed below:

Count	On or About Date	Method	Victim	Amount
1	December 29, 2021	Cashier's Check	Victim 1	\$5,000
2	June 11, 2022	Cash Withdrawal	Victim 1	\$5,500
3	November 26, 2022	Cashier's Check	Victim 2	\$3,100
4	December 9, 2022	Cashier's Check	Victim 2	\$6,250

Each Count is a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344(2).

FORFEITURE

1. The allegations contained in Counts 1 through 4 of this Indictment are hereby realleged and incorporated by reference for the purpose of alleging forfeitures pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Sections 981(a)(1)(C), 982(a)(2) and Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c).

2. Upon conviction of the offenses in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344 set forth in Counts 1 through 4 of this Indictment, TERESA PALMER, the Defendant, shall forfeit to the United States of America, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 982(a)(2) any property, real or personal, involved in such offense or any property traceable

to property, including but not limited to: an order of forfeiture in the amount of proceeds the defendant obtained from the offense.

3. If any of the property described above, as a result of any act or omission of the defendant:
- a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
 - b. has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third party;
 - c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the court;
 - d. has been substantially diminished in value; or
 - e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be divided without difficulty,

the United States of America shall be entitled to forfeiture of substitute property pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), as incorporated by Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c).

All pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 981(a)(1)(C), 982(a)(2) and 28 U.S.C. § 2461(c).

A TRUE BILL:


FOREPERSON

THOMAS E. WHEELER II
United States Attorney

By: 

Adam Eakman
Assistant United States Attorney
::KMS