

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2019

Former Postal Worker Sentenced to Fourteen Months in Prison for Stealing Electronics from Priority Mail Processing Facility

Defendant Stole Dozens of Digital Devices from Kent Priority Mail Annex and Recruited Others to Re-Sell them on Online Marketplaces and Elsewhere

A former U.S. Postal Service employee was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Seattle to fourteen months in prison for stealing electronic devices from mail shipments and directing others to sell the stolen devices at pawn shops and on online marketplaces. JAMIE GUHLKE, 56, of Federal Way, Washington was indicted for theft of mail in April 2018 and pleaded guilty in November 2018. At the sentencing hearing U.S. District Judge James L. Robart said that GUHLKE's crimes were a violation of her "position of trust" as a government employee.

According to records filed in the case, in 2015, while still employed as a mail handler at the United States Postal Service Priority Mail Annex in Kent, Washington, GUHLKE stole as many as 44 packages mailed by Quick Ship Electronics, Inc., a Woodinville-based electronics distributor, to customers across the country. The packages contained digital devices, including Apple iPads and Samsung Galaxy tablets. The thefts interfered with operations at the Priority Mail Annex, which is responsible for processing the vast majority of Priority Mail that originates in Washington State. Law enforcement traced the stolen devices to GUHLKE through records obtained from online marketplaces, like 'OfferUp,' 'Craigslist,' and 'eBay,'" as well as pawnshops. Those records showed that GUHLKE used a network of other people to re-sell the devices that she had stolen.

Law enforcement agents stopped GUHLKE's car as she left work on August 26, 2015, and saw a Priority Mail package containing a stolen device on the passenger side of her car. In response, GUHLKE tried to flee, ignored commands and stomped on a police officer's foot. After her employment at USPS was suspended, GUHLKE filed an unsuccessful claim for unemployment

benefits, in which she denied the thefts and claimed that she had been set up by other USPS employees. As part of GUHLKE's sentence, Judge Robart ordered her to pay \$15,458 in restitution to Quick Ship Electronics.

"The majority of postal employees are hard-working public servants dedicated to moving mail to its proper destination," U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, Western Area Field Office Special Agent-in-Charge John D. Masters said. "Unfortunately, Ms. Gulhke decided to betray the public's trust and steal mail from postal customers. Today's sentence demonstrates that USPS OIG Special Agents and the U.S. Attorney's Office are committed to safeguarding U.S. Mail and to hold accountable any Postal Service employee who steals mail."

The case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Service - Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG) and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Siddharth Velamoor.

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