

Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
District of Connecticut

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Man Who Cashed More Than \$60,000 in Stolen Postal Money Orders Sentenced to 30 Months in Federal Prison**

John H. Durham, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that James Lebel, 40, formerly of Brooklyn, Connecticut, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Kari A. Dooley in Bridgeport to 30 months of imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, for cashing more than \$60,000 in stolen postal money orders.

According to court documents and statements made in court, Lebel was married to Michelle Barbeau, who was employed by the U.S. Postal Service at the Wauregan Post Office in Plainfield. Between April and September 2017, Lebel and Barbeau conspired to take 179 blank U.S. Postal money orders from the Wauregan Post Office and imprint them in various denominations. Lebel then cashed more than \$60,355 in fraudulently imprinted postal money orders at a post office in Hartford.

Lebel's criminal history includes convictions for harassment, larceny, sexual assault, burglary and narcotics offenses.

Lebel has been detained since his arrest on September 19, 2018. On January 15, 2019, he pleaded guilty to one count conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Barbeau pleaded guilty to the same charge on January 16, 2019. On April 10, she was sentenced to three years of probation and eight months of home confinement.

Lebel and Barbeau were ordered to pay full restitution.

This matter was investigated by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of the Inspector General. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Ray Miller.

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