



Sunday, April 13, 2025

Public guardian accused of stealing \$100,000 enters plea

by Susan Samples



GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (WOOD) — A West Michigan guardian who stole from people she was supposed to protect faces up to ten years in prison.

Kimberley St. Onge pleaded no contest in a Kent County courtroom Thursday afternoon to three counts of embezzlement from a vulnerable adult between \$20,000 and \$50,000.

St. Onge's attorney told a judge that her client pleaded no contest due to potential civil liability; a no contest plea is not an admission of guilt, but it's treated as such for sentencing purposes.

Each of the three counts carries up to ten years in prison, and 17th Circuit Court Judge George J. Quist could order those sentences to run consecutively instead of concurrently, which is more common.

"Unfortunately, this woman took a lot of money from a lot of vulnerable people," Kent County Prosecutor Chris Becker told Target 8. "Caused a lot of harm."

Becker said St. Onge stole more than \$100,000 from 13 vulnerable adults for whom she served as guardian.

St. Onge had no criminal record when she applied to become a public guardian through Kent County Probate Court. The guardianship program confirmed that St. Onge served in that role from May 2023 to May 2024.

The program also confirmed that it runs criminal record, central registry and credit checks on all who apply to become guardians.

According to a police report obtained by Target 8, St. Onge convinced the Social Security Office to put her name on one of her ward's benefit checks and mail it

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Grand Rapids Police reported that St. Onge also wrote checks to her own family on her wards' bank accounts, made unauthorized transfers and ATM withdrawals, and spent the money on gas, a hotel, Taco Bell and T-Mobile, among other purchases.

"The real tragic part is they're not getting their money back," said Becker. "I mean, yeah, there will be a restitution order, and they'll be told they have to pay this, but when you're talking about this kind of money, it's not like they're putting it in a savings account. It's gone. We don't know where exactly the money went. It's not like (St. Onge) had a whole lot of assets."

Becker encourages people to watch out for each other, especially the most vulnerable among us.

"I always ask the people around the vulnerable people, be the eyes and ears," explained Becker. "If a vulnerable person has a guardian, they usually have some sort of mental incapacity, some short-term memory loss. They don't know what's happening. But if they're being isolated, that's the biggest thing, if they're isolated without any other contact with anybody else, that's when they're really susceptible to being a target and being victimized like this."

St. Onge is scheduled for sentencing in Kent County Circuit Court May 12.

Full Article & Source:

[Public guardian accused of stealing \\$100,000 enters plea](#)

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- [Marti Oakley's T. S. Radio Network](#)
- [Marcia Southwick on I-Heart Radio](#)
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Member Websites

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Other Sites

- [Catherine Falk Organization](#)
- [The Elder Reform Now Project - EARN](#)
- [ExploitationElderly.com](#)
- [Whistleblower's Summit](#)
- [A Breach of Trust - WWII Veteran](#)

Songs Written About Guardianship

- ["Poor People" by Clive Renfroe](#)
- ["My Last Regret" by Sharmain](#)

Government Accountability Office (GAO) Reports on Guardianship & Conservatorship

- [11/30/2016: ELDER ABUSE: The Extent of Abuse by Guardians is Unknown, but Some Measures Exist to Help Protect Older Adults](#)
- [08/11/2011: Incapacitated Adults: Oversight of Federal Fiduciaries and Court-Appointed Guardians Needs Improvement](#)
- [09/30/2010: Guardianships: Cases of Financial Exploitation, Neglect, and Abuse of Seniors](#)
- [02/26/2010: VA's Fiduciary Program: Improved Compliance and Policies Could Better Safeguard Veteran's Benefits](#)
- [09/07/2006: Guardianships: Little Progress in Ensuring Protection for Incapacitated Elderly People](#)
- [07/13/2004: Guardianships: Collaboration Needed to Protect Incapacitated Elderly People](#)

Suggested Reading

- [Your Courts, Their Secrets](#)
- [WLRN Investigations: Unguarded](#)
- [Who Guards the Guardians? \(Diane Dimond\)](#)
- [Who Guards the Guardians \(TX Observer\)](#)
- [Unguarded \(Record Eagle Series\) Isolated by Guardianship, part 3](#)
- [Unguarded \(Record Eagle Series\) MI Guardianship System Leaves Vulnerable Exposed, part 1](#)
- [Unguarded \(Record Eagle Series \) A Guardianship Gone Wrong, part 2](#)
- [Unguarded \(Reading Eagle Series\) Editorial: One Guiding Principle to Untangle Guardianship Flaws, part 4](#)
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- [Unguarded \(Columbus Dispatch series\)](#)
- [Unguarded - 3 part series \(Bridget Balch\)](#)
- [They Both Fought to Break Free From Guardianship. Only One Escaped \(BuzzFeed News\)](#)
- [The System of Court-Appointed Guardians Continues to Fail the Elderly](#)
- [The Silver Standard News](#)
- [The Price of Protection \(Adam Walser\)](#)
- [The Price of Care - 2023 Series - Andie Judson](#)
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- The Price of Care - 2022 Series - Andie Judson
- The Little Red Pill Being Pushed on the Elderly (CNN)
- The Fortress - Part 5 (Gretchen R. Hammond)
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- The Fortress - Part 2 (Gretchen R. Hammond)
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- The Con Game: A Failure of Trust
- Suffering in Secret (Chicago Tribune)
- Sick, Dying, and Raped in America's Nursing Homes
- Reuters: With US Elder Abuse in Spotlight, A Look at Guardians
- Protected or Prisoner - Part 1 (Apryl Marie Fogel)
- NYT: I'm Petitioning for the Return of My Life
- Marti Oakley: The PPJ Gazette
- Incapacitated - Florida's Guardianship Program
- How the Elderly Lose Their Rights
- Guardianships - A Broken Trust (John Pacenti)
- Guardianship in the US: Protection or Exploitation? (Emily Gurnon)
- Guardianship in the US, Part 3
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- Guardianship Battles in the Spotlight Spark New Calls for Reform (Jenny B. Davis)
- Guardianship (Barbara Peters Smith)
- Guardians For Profit
- Greed vs. Guardianship (Maria Tomash)
- Financial Abuse of the Elderly: A Detective's Case Files of Exploitation Crimes
- Families Go to Battle in Probate Court Only to Leave Without Anything
- Defending Your Loved One
- Clark County Private Guardians May Protect or...
- Beyond Britney (BuzzFeed News)
- Betrayal of Trust, Pt. 3
- Betrayal of Trust (Shannon Mullen) Pt. 2
- Betrayal of Trust (Shannon Mullen) Pt. 1
- Abused, Neglected Across Minnesota, Pt. 2 (David Joles)
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- AARP: What Happens When A Guardianship Gets Contentious
- AARP: Stolen Lives (Barry Yeoman)
- "Unguarded" (Joshua Ceballos & Daniel Riviera, WLRN)
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- "My Human Rights are Being Violated": Fighting a Family Conservatorship (BuzzFeed News)
- "In the Name of Protection" Part 5: "A Solution" (Ronnie Green & Holly Baker)

- ["In the Name of Protection" Part 4: "The Lawyers" \(Ronnie Green & Holly Baker\)](#)
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- ["In the Name of Protection" Part 1: "The Profiteers" \(Ronnie Green & Holly Baker\)](#)

Documentaries

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- ["Let Them Out!" \(Jody Santos\)](#)
- ["Let Them Out" Part 2 \(Jody Santos\)](#)
- ["Edith+Eddie" \(Laura Checkoway\)](#)
- ["The Guardian" Trailer \(Billie Mintz\)](#)

Videos

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- [John Oliver Explains How Legal Guardians Abuse Their Power](#)
- [Guardianship Agency Costs Elderly Woman Dearly \(CBS\)](#)
- [Puppets Acting Like People in Court Hearing](#)
- [My Parent's Keeper \(Full Measure, Sharyl Attkisson\)](#)
- [Guardianship Under Fire \(Darcy Spears\)](#)
- [Nursing Home Trust](#)

Guardian Abuse Authors

- [Officer John Caravella: Marked for Destruction](#)
- [Detective Joe Roubicek: Financial Exploitation of the Elderly - A Detective's Case Files of Exploitation Crimes](#)
- [Martha Laham: The Con Game - A Failure of Trust](#)
- [Protecting Mama: Surviving the Guardianship Swamp](#)

Links of Interest

- [Archangels of Justice](#)
- [Elder Advocates - Canada](#)

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- [Foundation Aiding the Elderly](#)

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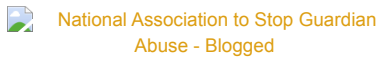
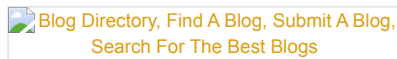
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▼ 2025 (732)

- ▶ 11/30 - 12/07 (2)
- ▶ 11/23 - 11/30 (13)
- ▶ 11/16 - 11/23 (13)
- ▶ 11/09 - 11/16 (12)
- ▶ 11/02 - 11/09 (17)
- ▶ 10/26 - 11/02 (17)
- ▶ 10/19 - 10/26 (16)
- ▶ 10/12 - 10/19 (15)
- ▶ 10/05 - 10/12 (13)
- ▶ 09/28 - 10/05 (17)
- ▶ 09/21 - 09/28 (12)
- ▶ 09/14 - 09/21 (16)
- ▶ 09/07 - 09/14 (14)
- ▶ 08/31 - 09/07 (10)
- ▶ 08/24 - 08/31 (13)
- ▶ 08/17 - 08/24 (15)
- ▶ 08/10 - 08/17 (13)
- ▶ 08/03 - 08/10 (14)
- ▶ 07/27 - 08/03 (15)
- ▶ 07/20 - 07/27 (14)
- ▶ 07/13 - 07/20 (14)
- ▶ 07/06 - 07/13 (15)
- ▶ 06/29 - 07/06 (14)
- ▶ 06/22 - 06/29 (19)
- ▶ 06/15 - 06/22 (14)
- ▶ 06/08 - 06/15 (14)
- ▶ 06/01 - 06/08 (15)
- ▶ 05/25 - 06/01 (17)
- ▶ 05/18 - 05/25 (14)
- ▶ 05/11 - 05/18 (17)
- ▶ 05/04 - 05/11 (17)
- ▶ 04/27 - 05/04 (17)
- ▶ 04/20 - 04/27 (18)
- ▼ 04/13 - 04/20 (17)

Man, who was held captive in Waterbury home for 20...

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assault

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bilk elderly...

Public guardian accused of stealing
\$100,000 enter...

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on Career: "I...

► 04/06 - 04/13 (17)

► 03/30 - 04/06 (17)

► 03/23 - 03/30 (17)

► 03/16 - 03/23 (18)

► 03/09 - 03/16 (16)

► 03/02 - 03/09 (18)

► 02/23 - 03/02 (15)

► 02/16 - 02/23 (18)

► 02/09 - 02/16 (17)

► 02/02 - 02/09 (18)

► 01/26 - 02/02 (17)

► 01/19 - 01/26 (17)

► 01/12 - 01/19 (17)

► 01/05 - 01/12 (17)

► 2024 (852)

► 2023 (995)

► 2022 (997)

► 2021 (1081)

► 2020 (1119)

► 2019 (1144)

► 2018 (1161)

► 2017 (1199)

► 2016 (1116)

► 2015 (1090)

► 2014 (1125)

► 2013 (1002)

► 2012 (950)

► 2011 (848)

► 2010 (954)

► 2009 (1325)

► 2008 (441)

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