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For Immediate Release

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# Bank Employee who Bilked Senior Citizens out of \$300,000 Sentenced to Prison

## *District Attorney Seeking Additional Victims of Leona Parsons*

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that Leona Parsons, 49, was sentenced to three years and eight months in state prison for stealing \$300,000 from four elderly victims who were longtime customers at Chase Bank in Imperial Beach. Parsons, who was convicted of six counts of theft from an elder, forgery and identity theft, methodically siphoned cash from victim bank accounts by inflating withdrawal slips when victims would visit the bank to conduct business.

**“In the span of four years, this defendant gained the trust of her returning customers and then violated that trust by stealing tens of thousands of dollars from each victim,” DA Summer Stephan said. “The defendant would insert herself in their lives attending funerals and making bedside visits in the hospital to ingratiate herself with the victims, all while stealing their money.”**

Parsons, a long-time employee of Chase Bank, had a relationship with several of her victims going back eight years. The most common scheme Parsons used was to have victims sit in her private office while she completed a withdrawal slip for them in the amount they requested. She would then alter the withdrawal slip so it was inflated by hundreds or even thousands of dollars at a time. The defendant would personally take the slip to the teller, make the withdrawal and return to her customer with a bank envelope full of the withdrawn amount. She would present the customer with the money they requested and keep the inflated amount, concealed in the bank envelope. In addition to this scheme, which she used about 85 times in four years, Parsons also forged withdrawal slips when customers were not in the bank.

Chase Bank acted swiftly in terminating Parsons as soon as her scam came to light. The bank reimbursed all of the victims in this case for their losses.

The victims had known Parsons so long, they considered her part of their families, allowing her to run personal errands and visit them in their homes. After Parsons visited one of the victims on his death bed, the victim told his wife to trust Parsons with their finances. “Parsons will take care of you,” the dying man told his wife, “Trust Leona.” Parsons stole \$13,025 from the widow.

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In another case, Parsons took one of her victims to a car lot and convinced him to pay the \$1,000 down payment on a new car, which he thought was a loan. She stole \$59,581 from him and never paid back the loan.

Deputy District Attorney Scott Pirrello prosecuted this case. If anyone suspects they have been a victim of Parsons, please contact San Diego Sheriff's Detective Michael Proffitt at 858-285-6111.

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**About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office**

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue justice and support victims daily across San Diego County. DA Summer Stephan has devoted her life to protecting children and families and providing justice to the voiceless and most vulnerable. She is a national leader in the fight against sexual exploitation and human trafficking, and has served as a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County for 28 years.*

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