



**GREGORY D. TOTTE**  
**District Attorney**

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Oxnard Bookkeeper Sentenced to Nine Years in Prison**

*VENTURA, California* – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today that Judge Bruce Young sentenced Inez Marie Byars (DOB 5/15/75), of Oxnard, to nine years in prison for perpetrating a fraud scheme victimizing an elderly and disabled Oxnard resident. The case against Byars resulted from an investigation conducted by the Oxnard Police Department.

Byars was employed as a part-time bookkeeper for a 71-year-old disabled man who runs a real estate business called Discountland, Inc. Discountland owns and manages real estate for its investors. Byars was responsible for processing company revenue and expenses. For years Byars misappropriated her employer's corporate and personal funds and his family's investment account for her own benefit. She accomplished these thefts by routinely forging checks and misusing a company ATM/debit card, and by diverting cash payments from customers. Byars also used her employer's identity to open and use credit accounts for her personal benefit without authorization. Byars was able to commit some of her fraud by posing as a close and loyal friend of her employer and his family, cultivating their trust.

Byars has been in custody since her arrest on April 10, 2019. Her bail was set at \$1.5 million after investigation revealed she had searched online about ways to kill her employer and not get caught. On July 31, 2019, Byars pled guilty to seven felony counts of elder fraud, grand theft, forgery and identity theft. Byars also admitted the aggravated white-collar crime enhancement. In addition to being sentenced to nine years in prison, the court ordered Byars to pay \$792,439 in restitution to the victim.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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