



**PATRICIA R. LYKOS  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS**

July 9, 2010

Donna Hawkins  
George Flynn  
(713) 755-3320

**Judge Sentences Couple in Theft of DAO Restitution Funds**

Houston, Tx – Eloise Guerrero Mireles, 38, a former District Attorney Office administrative assistant, was sentenced to 10 years probation and ordered to pay thousands in restitution as a condition of her sentence for stealing more than \$265,000 diverted from crime victims over a seven-year period. Mireles will spend 180 days in prison before beginning the probation.

Judge Kevin Fine of the 177th District Court also imposed some unusual conditions on her sentence, including requiring her to stand in a high-traffic intersection of Houston with a sign indicating that she is a thief. He also demanded that a sign be placed in Mireles' yard that states convicted thieves live there.

She pleaded guilty to the offense in April and was sentenced Thursday. Mireles could have received up to life in prison for the theft where she stole money from crime victims awaiting restitution.

Her husband Daniel Domingo Mireles, also 38, was sentenced to 10 years probation. In addition, he is responsible for court-ordered restitution and will spend 180 days in jail. He was convicted of theft in the second degree and could have received up to 20 years in prison.

The theft scheme unraveled after District Attorney Patricia Lykos took office in January of 2009 and asked for an audit of the Victim Witness Division. Investigators discovered antiquated accounting practices, handwritten ledgers, and a lack of accountability with the system for recording court-ordered restitution.

As the procedures and policies were implemented, Mireles turned to a different modus operandi in committing the thefts, and the amount of money stolen dropped dramatically. In 2009, she was only able to steal \$8,664, compared to over \$80,000 the previous year. The new system verified a referral from the probation department which sparked an investigation uncovering the deception and theft and led to the charging of Mireles.

“Eloise Mireles betrayed victims, betrayed public trust, and betrayed our office. I want people to know that we will not tolerate this behavior in Harris County and we will continue to vigorously prosecute offenders. Ultimately, the sentencing decision came down to the judge,” District Attorney Patricia Lykos said.

The District Attorney's Office cooperated fully with Special Prosecutor Lee Cox of Fort Bend County in the case. A search warrant of Mireles' home revealed how egregious her conduct was when a box of DA mail, envelopes, checks and money orders that she had stolen from the office was discovered.

Lykos became District Attorney in January 2009 with a pledge to improve victims' services and assistance as a foremost priority of her administration. Victims' Rights Division Director Michelle Permenter credited that leadership and the contributions of staff for the major revamping of the restitution process.

There are now built-in safeguards and accountability in a streamlined, computerized system that enables computerized tracking at every stage of the process. It has delivered more than \$3.6 million in expedited payments to victims of crime last year. The division mounted an intense investigative campaign to locate victims who have compensation awaiting them.

A search engine has been added to the District Attorney's Web site ([www.harriscountyda.com](http://www.harriscountyda.com)) to enable crime victims – people and businesses and other organizations -- to instantly check for unclaimed restitution.

“The restitution system – the attempt to make victims whole -- is central to our mission,” Division Director Permenter said. “We will continue to help people who have been victimized by crime to ensure that court-ordered restitution goes to the correct person.” (end)