

Jackie Lacey
District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Paul Eakins
Public Information Officer
213-257-2000
PEakins@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOffice

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Three Women Sentenced, Must Pay \$1 Million in Restitution for Child Care Fraud Scheme

The operator of a Lancaster daycare center and her two daughters have been sentenced and ordered to pay \$1 million in restitution for fraudulently collecting government child care assistance funds in a multi-year scheme, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Cathy Denice Pullum (dob 3/25/67) of Lancaster was sentenced yesterday to four years in state prison by Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Jose Sandoval. Her daughters, Ashley Ann Collins (dob 11/10/86) of Lancaster and Taylor Louise Lind (dob 8/17/90) of Palmdale, were each sentenced to five years of formal probation, 45 days of community service and two years of electronic monitoring.

The defendants were charged in February 2017 in case BA453550 with 72 felony counts, including conspiracy to commit grand theft of child care funds, grand theft of child care funds, perjury by declaration and forgery.

All three pleaded guilty on July 29 to one felony count of perjury by declaration and admitted a special allegation of taking more than \$500,000 through fraud and embezzlement.

Under the terms of the negotiated plea agreement, they were ordered to pay a total of \$1.07 million in restitution, for which they are jointly liable, to the California Department of Education. The women paid \$100,000 of the amount when they entered their plea.

From September 2009 to January 2015, the defendants recruited mothers who allowed their children's identities to be used for a child care fraud scheme, said Deputy District Attorney Bitia Ahdoot of the Public Assistance Fraud Division.

The defendants falsely reported the families received child care services through Pullum's business and collected money through a government assistance program for low-income parents, the prosecutor added. As part of the scheme, the trio also gave their co-conspirator families a small cash kickback.

Seven mothers who participated in the scheme were convicted in separate cases, each pleading guilty to one felony count of grand theft of personal property. Most have been sentenced to five years of formal probation, and in some cases, were required to do community service.

The cases were investigated by the District Attorney's Office, Bureau of Investigation.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.