



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY MCMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Florence Dentist Pleads Guilty To Willful Failure To File Income Taxes

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that John F. Coleman, D.M.D., 50, of 710 Williams Street in Lake City, pleaded guilty on Thursday, August 5, 2004 to one (1) count of Willful Failure to File an Individual Income Tax Return, a misdemeanor violation of §12-54-44(B)(3) of the code of laws, punishable to one (1) year imprisonment and/or a \$10,000 fine.

An investigation by the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) of the State Department of Revenue (SCDOR) determined Coleman, a dentist, had a pattern of not filing his income tax returns for calendar years 1996 through 2003. During that period, he earned income of \$2,263,868 and owed income tax of \$32,895. Coleman initially failed to file his 1996-1998 returns and was contacted by CID. He filed his 1996-1998 income tax returns on October 29, 1999 and paid tax, civil penalties, and interest in the amount of \$21,207.46 on April 17, 2000.

Coleman subsequently did not file his 1999 income tax return and pay the resulting tax and penalty due of 2,973 until January 31, 2001. He then did not file his 2000-2003 income tax returns until June 14, 2004. As of the date of his guilty plea, Coleman still owed income tax, not including civil penalties, civil costs, civil fees, and interest, for calendar years 2000-2003; a total amount of \$19,468.

Judge James E. Brogdon, Jr., presiding over the General Sessions Court of Florence County, sentenced Coleman to one (1) year imprisonment and a fine of \$10,000, suspended to five (5) years probation and a \$750 fine. He further ordered Coleman to pay income taxes for calendar years 2000-2003, as determined by SCDOR, and ordered that the probation may be terminated once the criminal court fine, criminal court assessments, and income taxes are paid in full.

This case was investigated by the Criminal Investigations Department of the State Department of Revenue, and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

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