



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Columbia Man Pleads Guilty To Forgery

Columbia, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Jerome Wade, 54, of 5203 North Main Street in Columbia, pleaded guilty on October 6, 2005, to two (2) counts of Forgery (over \$5,000), a felony violation of §16-13-10(B)(1) and punishable to ten (10) years imprisonment.

Investigation in the case revealed that on or about August 24, 2003, Wade presented an application insuring the life of another individual (his cousin) and that the application contained false information regarding the individual's health, location, occupation and that the signature of the individual was not a true one. The application for the policy was made in South Carolina and the telephone interview that the insurance company conducted was done with an individual in South Carolina, whom the company believed was the insured.

Wade made the premium payments on the policy and his address was the same as the one given to the insurance company for his cousin, the insured. Wade was the beneficiary on the policy, which was worth \$50,000.00.

Investigation revealed that the insured had been in Philadelphia at the time of the application and the phone interview. Further, the insured had been in poor health and had been turned down for a policy due to his condition. Family members confirmed these facts.

Following the death of his cousin, the insured, on February 2, 2004, Wade submitted a claim to Continental General Insurance Company.

Subsequently, on or about June 25, 2004, Wade presented a letter to the insurance company, claiming it was from the insuring agent. The letter attempted to clarify the discrepancies that had arisen in the insurance company's investigation into the death. According to the legitimate insuring agent for the policy, his signature was forged on the document and it contained false information.

Judge Reginald Lloyd, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Richland County, sentenced Wade to two (2) years suspended on two (2) years probation on the first count, and two (2) years suspended on the second count.

The case was investigated by the State Law Enforcement Division and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

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