

New Bedford woman charged with embezzling nearly \$600,000 from employer

The former bookkeeper of a New Bedford-based seafood company has been charged and has agreed to plead guilty in connection with embezzling nearly \$600,000 from her employer.

Kara Howland, 37, of New Bedford, was charged with bank fraud and filing a false tax return. Under the terms of the plea agreement, the parties have agreed to a sentence, subject to the Court's approval, of 18 to 36 months in prison, a fine and restitution. A plea hearing has not yet been scheduled by the Court.

According to court documents, between January 2016 and December 2019, Howland embezzled \$598,241 from her employer by writing checks from her employer's bank accounts to pay her credit card bills. Howland altered the company's internal accounting records to make it appear that the checks were paid to legitimate vendors. Additionally, Howland did not report or include the funds that she embezzled on her federal income tax filings, resulting in a tax loss of \$180,863.

The charge of bank fraud provides a sentence of up to 30 years in prison, five years of supervised release and a fine of up to \$1 million or twice the gross gain or loss. The charge of filing a false tax return provides for a sentence of up to three years in prison, one year of supervised release and a fine of \$100,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Joleen D. Simpson, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations in Boston; and Craig A.

Marech, Resident Agent in Charge of the Providence Office of the U.S. Secret Service, made the announcement today. The New Bedford Police Department also provided assistance. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristen A. Kearney of Lelling's Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit is prosecuting the case.

New Bedford launches NB Resilient, city's climate action and resilience plan

With the start of 2021, Mayor Jon Mitchell and the City of New Bedford have formally launched NB Resilient, the City's strategic climate action plan aimed at climate adaptation and mitigation.

The plan sets ambitious but achievable goals to help New Bedford achieve its vision – “a thriving, self-sustaining city that is culturally and historically secure, and ready to implement innovative approaches to prepare for tomorrow's possibilities.”

The full NB Resilient plan and a dashboard marking its progress have officially launched at nbresilient.com.

Under the leadership of Mayor Mitchell and led by the Department of Resilience and Environmental Stewardship, New Bedford created a climate action steering committee to support and develop a plan around six focus areas – climate and energy; economy and jobs; infrastructure, utilities and waste; natural resources; public health and safety; and transportation and land use – designed to cover all aspects of the city.

These goals address climate adaptation and resilience, and are geared toward enabling all residents of New Bedford to thrive, including:

- 100% of waste diverted from landfills by 2050
- Protecting the Port of New Bedford from sea level rise through infrastructure and resilience investments
- Offsetting the city's carbon footprint through the planting of thousands of trees in New Bedford
- Committing to green building practices in new facility investments
- Improving food security and healthy living for New Bedford residents

"In the midst of the pandemic, we in New Bedford know that the world goes on. There are other challenges we face, there are other opportunities we must seize – and top among all of them are the threats and opportunities presented by climate change," Mayor Mitchell said in the official launch video for the plan. "We know that our climate adaptation and mitigation efforts have to keep up with the times. That's why we went about the work of developing a strategic plan: to reset our efforts, employ the data we track, and stay ahead of the challenges that climate change poses."

"New Bedford will continue to be a leader when it comes to renewable energy, we will continue to be a leader in energy conservation, and when it comes to climate adaptations and protections, we'll continue to lead there, too," Mayor Mitchell said. "Years from now, people will say that this was a moment when we had to step up. Let them say that we made the right choices so that they could lead healthier, more fulfilling lives."

While the plan itself is complete, the work to move toward a

more resilient New Bedford is just beginning. New Bedford's greatest asset is its people, and the climate action and resilience plan will have the greatest impact with more residents involved.

"NB Resilient is already leading to progress," said Michele Paul, Director of Resilience and Environmental Stewardship for the City of New Bedford. "The nbresilient.com dashboard is tracking the important steps we've already taken, and will continue to be updated so that everyone – businesses, neighborhoods, individuals – can be a part of building a healthier, safer, and more resilient city."

NB Resilient is a roadmap for everyone in the city to take action, and it includes short- and long-term goals for a safe, thriving city – from reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to ensuring the waterfront and port are protected from the climate change the world is experiencing.

NB Resilient's inclusive plan is possible thanks to the partnership of the New Bedford City Council, the city's neighborhood associations, Coastline Elderly Services, the Community Economic Development Center, Love The Ave, Groundwork Southcoast, Preservation of Affordable Housing, and organizations and residents who participated in the climate action plan steering committee and community meetings.

More about New Bedford's leadership in Solar & Wind Energy and Green Innovation

Solar Leadership:

- Under Mayor Jon Mitchell the City of New Bedford installed more solar capacity on a per capita basis than any other city in the continental United States besides San Diego. The City's leadership was profiled in the Wall Street Journal in 2014.
- Ten major solar installations totaling more than \$60 million in privately financed construction will save city taxpayers

nearly \$1 million this year by cutting the utility bills of city departments. Over 20 years the solar projects are projected to save city government \$22 million.

Offshore Wind Energy Development:

- New Bedford is the closest industrial port to the largest wind energy reserves in the United States, areas of open ocean south of Martha's Vineyard off the Massachusetts coast.
- With the state and federal government now moving to develop these waters for large offshore wind turbine farms, major industry players, including Vineyard Wind and Mayflower Wind, have committed to using the city's port to stage their projects.
- A key advantage of New Bedford's port is a \$100 million marine terminal built specifically to handle the heavy loads of turbine components. Unique in North America, the New Bedford Marine Commerce Terminal, was financed and constructed by the Commonwealth's Clean Energy Center with support from the City.

Green Municipal Innovation:

- The City of New Bedford boasts one of the largest municipal electric car fleets in Massachusetts. The vehicles, in use by Health Department inspectors in city neighborhoods, and other departments, are leased for just \$70 per month per vehicle as the result of attractive financing and incentives.
- The City of New Bedford's municipal landfill hosts two separate waste-to-energy projects which convert landfill gases and biogas into 3.4 megawatts of electricity annually.
- The City recently completed one of the largest performance-contracting initiatives anywhere in the Northeast. The long-term partnership with Siemens Corporation has retrofitted the City's stock of nearly 100 municipal buildings with energy

efficiency measures, including heating and cooling systems and climate controls.

NOTICE: New Bedford Christmas tree disposal/collection schedule

ABC Disposal will collect real Christmas trees from Monday, January 11 through Friday, January 15.

During this week only, residents may place trees at the curb by 7:00 a.m. the weekday after their usual trash and recycling collection. For residents whose trash collection is on Fridays, Christmas trees will only be collected on Monday, January 11.

If a resident's trash is collected on Mondays, Christmas trees will be collected on Tuesday, January 12, and so on.

Christmas trees will not be collected curbside at any other time. Please remove all ornaments, stands, lights, and tinsel. Do not place trees in plastic bags.

Christmas trees can also be dropped off at the East Beach parking lot on East Rodney French Boulevard between Hudson Street and Seymour Street until January 15; or Brooklawn Park by the Pony League Field (enter at Irvington Street) until January 15.

The Shawmut Avenue Transfer Station at 1103 Shawmut Avenue is also open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12 Noon to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

New Bedford Police Department seize Fentanyl, Percocets, cocaine and cash after traffic stop

Yesterday NBPD Narcotics and Gang Unit Detectives seized 40 grams of fentanyl, 40 Percocet pills, 4 grams of cocaine, and \$960 in the area of Tinkham St. and Acushnet Ave. after stopping a vehicle involved in a drug transaction.

Yamil Velazquez Acevedo, 25, Providence, and Candido Delgado, 45, 72 Adams St., Apt. #2, were both arrested and charged with multiple trafficking offenses. Detectives located narcotics concealed in a soda can improvised to act as a hide container.

Candido Delgado has previous narcotics distribution convictions and was last convicted of distributing Class A substance in 2018.

Detective Samuel Algarin-Mojica was the arresting officer in this case.

Dartmouth Police arrest man concerning an alleged rape

According to Dartmouth Police, on Wednesday, January 6, at approximately 6:00 a.m., members of both the Dartmouth Police

Department and the Massachusetts State Police Violent Fugitive Apprehension Section, arrested Justin Camara, 25, homeless, on a warrant associated with an alleged rape which occurred in Dartmouth on New Year's Eve.

The investigation was conducted by Officer Cristina Brum, along with the assistance of Detective Kyle Costa and Dartmouth Crime Analyst Keri LEBEAU.

According to Chief Brian P. Levesque, "Our commitment to both the victim and the members of this community was unwavering when it came to swiftly bringing this violent criminal to justice".

After he was booked, Camara was transported to New Bedford District Court to be arraigned.

Wareham Police Department arrest woman for allegedly scuffling with officers

On Sunday, January 3, at about 11:50 p.m. officers responded to an address on Fearing Hill Road for a person playing loud music in a vehicle. Officer Hannah Salerno asked the occupant of the vehicle to turn down the music, and the officer cleared the area, with peace restored.

At about 12:30 a.m. Officer Salerno was again dispatched to the same location, for another disturbance involving loud music. Officer Salerno asked the person to turn off the engine and go in the house. This time the person refused, and a scuffle ensued after an attempt was made to place her under

arrest. With the assistance of Sergeant Daniel Henderson and Officer Justin Silveira, the individual was placed in custody. Heather Whiteley (37), of West Wareham, was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, and resisting arrest.

Ms. Whiteley refused to be placed into a cruiser and was very belligerent. Sergeant Henderson directed Officer Silveira to go back to the police station and bring the prisoner transport van to the scene so that Whiteley could be safely moved. The three officers had to physically lift and place her in the van because of her refusal to cooperate. There were no injuries reported during the incident.

New Bedford's SouthCoast Community Foundation Emergency Fund awards over \$600,000 to local non-profits

The SouthCoast Community Foundation announced it is awarding over \$600K of Stabilization Grants from its SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund to 60 nonprofits from the Southeastern, Massachusetts region. The selected group of 501(c)3 organizations clearly demonstrated a financial need due to COVID-19 and cover a range of areas of need including arts and culture, education, and economic opportunity.

The recipients also actively serve vulnerable populations, are dedicated to a re-envisioned organization of adaptability and innovation, and have demonstrated a commitment toward racially diverse leadership within the nonprofit.

“Although we have seen amazing resilience from community-grounded nonprofits they are still struggling due to the relentless impact of COVID-19,” said, John Vasconcellos, President of SouthCoast Community Foundation. “We are exceedingly grateful that our Emergency Response Fund has been able to provide them critical support thanks to the outpouring of philanthropic partnerships we’ve found with so many local individuals, families, businesses, and other foundations. This is our tenth round of grant-making from the Fund. Given the state of the pandemic and its continuing impact to our most vulnerable, we look forward to continuing to raise and grant these important funds well into 2021.”

Grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$25,000 are being issued to the following grantees:

Arts & Culture Focus

- AHA!
- Attleboro Arts Museum
- Cape Verdean Association in New Bedford, Inc.
- Dartmouth Cultural Center
- Dream Out Loud Center
- Fall River Symphony Orchestra
- Mass Music & Arts Society
- Massachusetts Design Art & Technology Institute
- Narrows Center for the Arts
- New Bedford Art Museum/ArtWorks!
- New Bedford Festival Theatre
- New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center
- New Bedford Historical Society
- Old Dartmouth Historical Society
- On Stage Theatrical Productions, Inc.
- Plymouth Guild, Inc.
- Seaglass Theater Company
- YEAH! Corps
- Your Theatre, Inc.
- Zeiterion Theatre, Inc.

Economic Opportunity Focus

- Catholic Social Services
- Community Action for Better Housing, Inc.
- Community Economic Development Center
- Coastal Foodshed, Inc.
- Father Bill's & MainSpring
- Gleason Family YMCA
- Habitat for Humanity of Greater Plymouth
- Haven's Healing Hands
- Health Imperatives, Inc.
- House of Possibilities
- Joe Andruzzi Foundation
- Kennedy-Donovan Center, Inc.
- Marion Institute
- PACE, Inc.
- Plymouth Task Force to End Homelessness
- Round the Bend Farm
- SouthCoast LGBTQ Network, Inc.
- Southeastern Massachusetts Veterans Housing Program, Inc.
- St. Peter's Episcopal Church
- St. Vincent de Paul Society/Sacred Heart Food Pantry
- The Arc of Bristol County
- The Arc of Plymouth and Upper Cape Cod
- The Literacy Center
- The Salvation Army – Brockton
- The Salvation Army – New Bedford
- The Women's Center
- United Way of Greater New Bedford

Education Focus

- Attleboro YMCA
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro South
- Boys and Girls Club of Fall River
- Brockton Day Nursery, Inc
- Coaching4Change
- Dennison Memorial Community Center
- Hockomock Area YMCA

- NorthStar Learning Centers
- Our Sisters' School
- People Incorporated
- Schwartz Center for Children
- Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc.
- YWCA of Southeastern, MA

The SouthCoast Community Foundation established the SouthCoast Emergency Response Fund in partnership with local funders, in March of 2020. The Fund provides flexible resources to organizations that work with those most vulnerable due to the COVID-19 virus and the most impacted by inequity. To date, it has raised nearly

\$6 million and granted over \$5.4 million to 120 nonprofits. Donations to the SouthCoast Emergency Fund can be made online. For general inquiries about the Fund please direct inquiries to emergencyfund@southcoastcf.org.

The Foundation is a public charity serving thousands of people throughout Southeastern Massachusetts who share a common goal of improving the quality of life through philanthropy. Since 1995, the Community Foundation has distributed over \$39 million from more than 200 funds to humanitarian, educational, and cultural organizations in the region. To learn more about the Community Foundation, visit www.southcoastcf.org.

Fall River's "Forever Paws" updates on Miss Molly's

condition

"Miss Molly has been discharged from NEMAC. She has had surgery, and is recovering. She will be on antibiotics and pain medication. She needs to be monitored constantly, for her wound care, surgery site, eating, and drinking. She is in the best possible foster care for her recovery and has a follow-up appointment in 2 weeks. She still has a long way to go so PLEASE keep her in your thoughts and prayers. Thank You all for your donations, shares and well wishes! We appreciate you!

#foreverpawsfamily

#prayersformolly

#familypetsaresuperheros

#gratefuleveryday

Donations for her care can be made via FB, Venmo, in person at the shelter, via our website with the Donate Button or over the phone via credit card. She still has quite the recovery ahead of her but we believe she WILL get the happy ending she deserves!"



Forever Paws photo.

Bristol Community College to host Virtual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Bristol Community College will host the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Breakfast and Day of Service virtually this year given the current pandemic. The college is proud to continue its dedication and recognition of Dr. King's legacy of service with a special event on Monday, January 18, at 9 a.m.

The virtual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service event will include a keynote presentation and social justice workshops led by Dr. David E. Jones, Chief Diversity Officer and Director of Talent Management at William Paterson University, as well as public resources to assist the community with how to safely provide service where it is needed most.

Join the college on Monday, January 18, 2021, at 9 a.m., on the free Zoom video platform by registering at the link below. Once registered, participants will receive an email invite with the Zoom link and information to join the event. The virtual event is free and open to everyone.

Please register here: www.bristolcc.edu/MLK

Dr. David E. Jones currently serves as Chief Diversity Officer and Director of Talent Management at William Paterson University, in Wayne, N.J., and is a member of the teaching faculty for the Equity Institute at the University of Southern California Race and Equity Center. Dr. Jones regularly leads diversity workshops, training sessions or keynotes to help individuals and organizations change culture and develop more

inclusive communities. He is the recipient of the American College Personnel Association Commission for Social Justice Educators Award and the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Doris Ching Award for Excellence as a Student Affairs Professional.

For more information about Bristol Community College's virtual 2021 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, please visit www.bristolcc.edu/MLK or email Robert.Delaleu@bristolcc.edu.

New Bedford's OHCD to host public meetings to discuss its FY21 Annual Action Plan

The City of New Bedford's Office of Housing and Community Development is hosting two (2) public meetings in January to discuss its FY21 Annual Action Plan.

As part of its Annual Action Plan process, the City's Office of Housing & Community Development (OHCD) is hosting to explain and discuss the federal funding that the city receives as an entitlement community under the U.S. Department of Housing & Community Development.

Join us in this virtual meeting to hear about these programs and share your ideas about these limited federal funds and how they could be used to serve the needs of New Bedford residents, particularly those of low and moderate incomes, over the coming fiscal year.

We hope you will take the time to join us for one of these sessions; we want to hear what you think are the greatest

housing and community development needs and priorities within the City of New Bedford!

If you intend on applying for funding you are strongly encouraged to attend and participate in one of these two forums.

Information will be provided explaining how to submit proposals that will respond to those needs in the coming fiscal

year. Two times are available via ZOOM (the second meeting is a repeat of the first):

- Tuesday, January 12, 2021 Community Meeting via ZOOM (6pm-7:30pm)

<https://zoom.us/j/95021172006?pwd=ZUFEdG1keTJuTzdjVFNldmPydUdwdz09>

- Wednesday, January 13, 2021 Community Meeting via ZOOM (6pm-7:30pm)

<https://zoom.us/j/93690593398?pwd=R3p5bGdrYnFMUGNEck0wVUhHRzNldz09>

The FY2021 RFP (proposal application) will be made available online at the OHCD website at <https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/housing-community-development/> beginning Tuesday evening, January 12th.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Clarke, Deputy Director Community Development, at Jennifer.Clarke@newbedford-ma.gov or at 508 979-1500.

The City of New Bedford is also hosting an RFP workshop to explain and discuss the RFP (application) and process for applying for these funds.

RFP WORKSHOP

Friday, January 15th.2021 at 9am for CDBG and at 10am for ESG.

Register at OHCD@newbedford-ma.gov by Thursday January 14th to

receive the ZOOM Information you'll need.

This information is available in Portuguese or Spanish upon request. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if any accommodations are needed, please contact the Office of Housing and Community Development at 508.979.1500. Requests should be made as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.