

**July 20, 2022**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: FORMER WINNEBAGO COUNTY CORONER PLEADS GUILTY TO THEFT AND OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul announced former Winnebago County Coroner William Hintz pleaded guilty today to charges he used his county position to steal money from taxpayers and families of indigent individuals from Winnebago County.

William Hintz, 52, pleaded guilty today in Winnebago County Circuit Court to the theft of government property greater than \$10,000 and less than \$100,000 and official misconduct based on forgery. He was sentenced to 180 days in jail and a total of 48 months of probation. Additionally, he is ordered to pay \$32,817.05 in restitution. Hintz resigned his position as Winnebago County coroner today.

"The actions of this former public servant are reprehensible. While grieving families were mourning the loss of their family members, the defendant was busy defrauding them and the taxpayers of Winnebago County," Raoul said. "Public officials who break the trust of the public they serve need to be held accountable."

Today's plea is the result of charges Raoul filed in October 2020, alleging that as Winnebago County's coroner, Hintz and his wife allegedly used county funds for personal expenditures. Raoul alleged that from April 2018 until July 2020, Hintz spent more than \$10,000 on hotel rooms, car rentals, gasoline and tolls unrelated to county business. Raoul filed separate charges against Michelle Hintz in October 2020, alleging she was directly involved with the unauthorized use of her husband's county credit cards.

Raoul further alleged that Hintz altered and submitted various hotel billing statements to the county in order to support what he purported to be authorized credit card spending. According to the Attorney General's indictment, Hintz went as far as creating a fake conference agenda in an attempt to prove his participation in a conference in New York. However, there was allegedly no evidence of his registration or attendance.

The Illinois State Police (ISP) initially began investigating Hintz over the alleged fraudulent use of a Winnebago County gasoline card and credit card. Following the initial 2020 indictment, investigators with the ISP received additional information that Hintz had allegedly stolen around \$2,500 from families of individuals who had been cremated at the county's expense.

The Attorney General's office prosecuted both cases based on a referral by the Winnebago County State's Attorney's office.

The case against Michelle Hintz is pending, and she is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Assistant Attorney General Haley Bookhout is handling the cases for Raoul's Public Integrity Bureau, and Assistant Attorney General Jonathan McKay is handling the cases for Raoul's Criminal Prosecutions and Trials Assistance Bureau.