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## Ann Golden Could See Zero Jail Time After Reaching Plea Deal; Assets Will Be Forfeited (Updated)

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**Violet Anne Golden with one of her brothers leaving the District Court on St. Croix following a hearing in July 2019 By. ERNICE GILBERT/VI CONSORTIUM**

**UPDATE:** While Violet Anne Golden, the former Casino Control Commission (V.I.C.C.) chairwoman who was charged in a 30-count indictment on July 17, faces probation to 10 years in jail after agreeing to a plea deal that sees her admitting to two counts, upon closer examination of the plea deal, Ms. Golden will most likely serve 63-78 months in prison.

**ORIGINAL STORY:** ST. CROIX — Violet Anne Golden, the former Casino Control Commission (V.I.C.C.) Chairwoman who was charged in a 30-count indictment on July 17, along with alleged co-conspirator Stephanie Barnes, alleging the pair conspired to steal hundreds of

thousands of dollars in commission funds, could possibly see no jail time after signing a [plea agreement](#) admitting that federal prosecutors had enough evidence to prove she stole government funds.

The plea agreement, which was filed Wednesday but signed on Dec. 19, sees Ms. Golden conceding that the federal government could convict her on counts four and 27 of the 30-count indictment.

Count four reads, "From on or about January 1, 2018 through on or about December 31, 2018, in the District of the Virgin Islands and elsewhere, and within the jurisdiction of this Court, the defendant, Violet Anne Golden, being an agent of the Virgin Islands Government, did embezzle, steal, obtain by fraud, without authority knowingly convert to the use of a person not the rightful owner, and intentionally misapply property worth at least \$5,000 owned by, under the care of, and under the custody and control of an organization, government, and agency which received more than \$10,000 in federal program benefits in a one-year period; that is, GOLDEN, an agent of the Virgin Islands government, obtained at least \$5,000 in funds of the Virgin Islands government through the use of Commission credit cards and funds for the personal purchases."

Count 27 reads, "During the calendar year 2014, the defendant, Violet Anne Golden, who was a resident of St. Croix, VI, had and received gross income, including funds stolen and embezzled from the Commission and wages and compensation earned in her employment with the Commission, in excess of the minimum filing requirement and was therefore required under the income tax law of the Virgin Islands and the regulations issued thereunder to make an income tax return to the Virgin Islands Bureau of Internal Revenue, following the close of calendar year 2014 and on or before April 15, 2015. Well knowing and believing all of the foregoing, she did willfully fail, on or about April 15, 2015, in the District of the Virgin Islands and elsewhere, to make an income tax return. All in violation of Title 33, Virgin Islands Code, Section 1524."

In essence, Ms. Golden is admitting to willful failing to file her tax returns and theft of federal program funds. Combined, the charges carry an 11-year maximum sentence — 10 years for theft of federal program funds and 1 year for willful failure to file tax returns. The plea deal admits, among other things, that Ms. Golden along with co-conspirator Ms. Barnes and others, used V.I.C.C. funds in the amount of \$295,50 for personal use. Additionally, the theft of federal program funds charge carries a fine of \$250,000, while the failure to file tax return count carries a \$10,000 fine.

If the plea is accepted by a judge, Ms. Golden would have the possibility of no jail time. She would also steer clear of a possibly lengthy trial.

The plea deal also comes with other costly losses for Ms. Golden: she faces stiff financial penalties, including the forfeiture of all forfeitable assets.

According to the original indictment, Ms. Golden and Ms. Barnes used commission money for a variety of personal expenditures, including but not limited to trips to Walt Disney World, tickets to a Broadway production of Hamilton, and making a down payment for the purchase of a vehicle. Their publicly funded, lavish lifestyle allegedly included travel to a St. Kitts music festival aboard a private jet, stays at a posh Ritz-Carlton hotel in New York and thousands of dollars worth of jewelry and clothing from high-end retailers.

The indictment also alleges that Ms. Golden, who had an annual salary of \$105,000, failed to file timely tax returns for the 2014 – 2017 tax years.

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