



Robert R. Snaza
Sheriff

OFFICE OF THE LEWIS COUNTY
SHERIFF

345 W. Main Street
Chehalis, WA 98532-1900
Phone: (360) 748-9286 • Fax: (360) 740-1476 • TDD: (360) 740-1480
www.lewiscountywa.gov/sheriff

"Public Safety through Professional Service"

Wes H. Rethwill
Undersheriff

Dustin G. Breen
Field Operations Chief

Chris J. Sweet
Corrections Chief

Kevin M. Engelbertson
Special Services Chief

PRESS RELEASE

Date/Time: 03-09-23 @ 1530 Hours
Contact: Chief Deputy Dusty Breen
Phone: (360) 740-1327
Release #: 1

Former Lewis County Sheriff's Office Employee Referred on Charges Related to Theft of Funds

On 03/08/23, investigators with the Washington State Patrol referred Jennifer M. Teitzel, 52 of Chehalis, to the Lewis County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for Theft in the 1st Degree, as well as Identity Theft in the 1st Degree. The referred charges were in reference to Teitzel's official capacity as a former Support Technician with the Lewis County Sheriff's Office Corrections Bureau. Teitzel was employed with the Lewis County Sheriff's Office until August of 2020.

In May of 2022, support staff with the Corrections Bureau discovered suspicious financial transactions made from the Inmate Program Fund in 2019 and in 2020. Further review led staff to believe these transactions were fraudulent in nature. As a result, on 06/09/22 the Lewis County Sheriff's Office requested the Washington State Patrol to conduct an independent criminal investigation, resulting in the aforementioned referral. The investigation revealed a theft in excess of \$10,000.00 from funding established for purchasing inmate related items. This funding is a result of revenue generated through inmate commissary and other related services.

The Washington State Patrol is the primary investigating agency, and any additional media request specific to the investigation should be directed to them.

###

Lewis County Sheriff's Office Mission Statement:

Being a committed community partner, providing professional service to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life in Lewis County.