

Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



STATE OF ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF LAW
1275 W. WASHINGTON STREET
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007-2926
WWW.AZAG.GOV

MOLLY E. EDWARDS
PRESS SECRETARY
PHONE: (602) 542-8019
CELL PHONE: (602) 725-2200
MOLLY.EDWARDS@AZAG.GOV

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terry Goddard Announces Guilty Plea by Former Veterans Agency Director

(Phoenix, Ariz. -- Sept. 1, 2010) Attorney General Terry Goddard announced that Patrick Chorpenning Sr., 63, of Peoria, who served as director of the Arizona Department of Veterans Services (AZDVS) between 1999 and 2007, pleaded guilty today to two felony charges in Maricopa County Superior Court.

Chorpenning pleaded guilty to conflict of interest and solicitation to commit a violation of the procurement code, both Class 6 felonies.

A plea agreement provides that he pay \$421,351 to the State and be placed on probation. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 6 by Judge Susan Brnovich.

The conflict of interest count pertains to the hiring of his wife while he was director of the veterans agency in a position he created for her. He also was accused of helping obtain an unjustified increase in her salary. His wife was employed at the agency for more than three years.

The solicitation charge relates to his improper payment of \$382,756 of AZDVS funds to a media company, Go Media of Phoenix, by circumventing the State Procurement Code from 2002 to 2005.

The \$421,351 in restitution represents the unauthorized money paid to Go Media in violation of the Procurement Code, plus an additional \$38,595 in unauthorized expenditures of agency money for employee meals and gifts.

"These offenses amounted to a serious misuse of public money and the public trust," Goddard said. "Arizona's veterans have served their country selflessly. We owe it to them to ensure that the services and benefits they have earned are never misspent."

The case was prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Theodore Campagnolo. The case was investigated by the Arizona Office of the Auditor General and the Special Investigations Section of the Attorney General's Office. Chorpenning was indicted on eight counts in November 2009.

A photo of the defendant is attached. For more information, contact Press Secretary Molly Edwards at (602) 542-8019.

###