

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT *of* NORTH CAROLINA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of North Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

Cameron Man Pleads Guilty to Bank Fraud Scheme

WILMINGTON, N.C. A Cameron man pleaded guilty in federal court today to a charge of bank fraud arising out of a scheme to defraud financial institutions in the Eastern District of North Carolina and elsewhere.

According to court documents and information presented at the hearing, Edward Wheeler is a staff sergeant assigned to Pope Army Airfield. From January 2019 to September 2021, Wheeler defrauded multiple financial institutions by filing account fraud claims that were themselves fraudulent. To execute the scheme, Wheeler opened bank accounts and conducted financial transactions for his personal benefit. The transactions included: EFT and wire transfers to accounts Wheeler held with other banks; purchases of cryptocurrency; purchases of gold and other precious metals, and purchases of goods from Amazon and Ebay.

After the transactions were completed, Wheeler filed fraud claims with the banks wherein Wheeler falsely stated that the transactions were unauthorized, knowing that he had conducted the transactions himself and for his own benefit. Through the filing of the fraud claims, Wheeler induced the banks to refund his accounts with provisional credits in the amount of the claimed loss. After the accounts were refunded, Wheeler promptly transferred the funds to other accounts so that the money could not be recouped by the victim banks. Wheeler executed or attempted to execute the scheme against at least six financial institutions.

Wheeler pleaded guilty to bank fraud and faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison when sentenced during the August 2022 term of court.

Michael Easley, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, made the announcement. The Defense Criminal Investigative Service and the United States Air Force Office of Special Investigations are investigating the case and Assistant U.S. Attorney Toby Lathan is prosecuting the case.

A copy of this press release is located on our [website](#).

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - North Carolina, Eastern](#)

