



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Court Refuses to Reduce Novato Woman's Felony Convictions** ***District Attorney staff keeps close watch on workers' compensation fraud***

**San Rafael, CA** – A Marin County Superior Court judge has denied a Novato woman's request to have her 2022 fraud-related convictions reduced from felonies to misdemeanors. The ruling was aligned with recommendations from [Marin County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecutors.

In August 2020, the District Attorney's Office charged Carmen Hall Soruco, 72, in an 18-count complaint for various felonies, including insurance fraud and filing false tax returns. The charges stemmed from the defendant's failure to properly secure workers' compensation insurance coverage for the employees of her construction company, Soruco Structures. The alleged fraud took place from 2013 through 2016.

The case has been prosecuted by Deputy District Attorneys Sean Kensinger and Wesley Pratt.

Hall Soruco pled guilty to felonies and was sentenced on February 9, 2022. At sentencing, she was ordered to pay over \$900,000 in restitution to the California State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) and the California Employment Development Department (EDD).

As of September 5, 2023, Hall Soruco and her husband, Antonio Soruco, had paid \$7,100, Pratt said. Antonio Soruco had been charged and pled guilty to a misdemeanor but is liable with his wife for the restitution.

The law allows a convicted felon to come to court and ask that their charges be reduced to misdemeanors. The court has the discretion to grant or deny the request based upon the underlying facts of the case. Soruco Hall reappeared in court on October 12, 2023, and contended that she had been compliant with the terms of her probation, justifying the reductions.

In this instance, Judge Beth S. Jordan agreed with prosecutors and ruled that Hall Soruco's behavior did not amount to misdemeanor conduct.

"Law-abiding contractors in Marin pay to properly protect and insure their workers," Pratt said. "There are business costs associated with insuring workers, and non-compliant contractors are able to under-bid and take business away from law-abiding companies. The Marin County District Attorney's Office will protect law abiding contractors by prosecuting those who cut corners and fail to secure the appropriate and necessary insurance coverages for their workers."

Workers' compensation fraud is a crime punishable by up to five years in prison and \$50,000 in fines. Please report suspected fraud directly to the Marin County District

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