



Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury

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Overton County Clerk Created Fake Vehicle Titles to Obtain Personal Loans

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office, working in conjunction with the Tennessee Highway Patrol and the Tennessee Department of Revenue, has resulted in findings related to the Overton County Clerk.

The investigation reveals that the official, working in her capacity as clerk, altered vehicle titles to improperly generate new registrations and titles. She then used these titles to obtain personal bank loans. Key findings from the investigation include:



- The clerk altered a title for a 1949 Cadillac to indicate that it had been sold to one of her family members; then altered the date of the sale to represent that it had been recently purchased. The 1949 Cadillac had been destroyed in a garage fire around the year 2000. The clerk registered the title with the state and used the new, false title as collateral to obtain a \$15,000 personal bank loan.
- The clerk altered the transaction information on the title for a 1979 Ford. Although this vehicle no longer exists, the clerk registered the vehicle with the state and used the new, false title as part of the collateral to obtain a \$28,000 personal bank loan.

During an interview with Highway Patrol and Revenue investigators, the clerk admitted to altering titles to obtain loans, and she stated she never took possession of the vehicles in question.

The clerk also manipulated and/or avoided paying sales tax by declaring vehicles as gifts, thereby falsifying county and state records. In one instance, the clerk sold a vehicle to a mechanic to whom she owed money and allowed it to be registered as a gift to the buyer.

Investigators also discovered that the clerk had misappropriated county-owned assets when she removed office furniture, equipment, and some flooring from the clerk's office space. The clerk did not obtain approval from the Overton County Executive. The office furniture and other equipment was loaded into a trailer and taken to private property.

The results of this investigation have been communicated with the Office of the District Attorney General of the 13th Judicial District.

"Public officials must conduct government business with a high level of integrity," said Comptroller Mumpower. "Falsifying transactions and creating erroneous tax exemptions violate state guidelines and statutes. Citizens expect their elected officials to demonstrate both personal and professional ethical conduct."

To view the investigative report, go to: <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/investigations/find.html>

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