



**Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury**

*December 2, 2024*

## **Three Indicted in Knox County for Theft from Emergency Rental Assistance Program**

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has resulted in the indictment of three people after investigators determined they misappropriated funds from the Knox County Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The program allows county residents who were negatively affected by the pandemic to receive rental and utility payment assistance.

The investigation began after Knox County officials reported questionable transactions to the Comptroller's Office.

Investigators determined that Amanda McKay, who worked for Knox County Grants and Community Development, misappropriated program funds totaling at least \$79,679. McKay used false client information to have rental and utility payments sent to herself and her former husband.



Investigators also question another \$9,073.24 that Amanda McKay received from the program. The funds were not authorized through the normal approval and payment process.

Additionally, Jennifer Harper, who worked for the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (KCCAC), and her husband, James Harper, misappropriated program funds totaling at least \$12,800. Investigators believe they used a false rental agreement to apply for and receive rental assistance.

Based upon this investigation, in November 2024, the Knox County Grand Jury indicted Amanda McKay, Jennifer Harper, and James Harper on a variety of charges including theft. The full list of charges can be viewed in the Comptroller's investigative report.

"Knox County and Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee officials should take steps to ensure their oversight and internal control systems are effective to prevent misappropriation," said Comptroller Mumpower. "I'm pleased to note the deficiencies that contributed to these acts are already being corrected."

To view the investigative report, go to [tncot.cc/doireports](https://tncot.cc/doireports). To view a map depicting Comptroller investigations, go to [tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations](https://tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations)

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Media contact: John Dunn, Director of Communications, 615.401.7755 or [john.dunn@cot.tn.gov](mailto:john.dunn@cot.tn.gov)

