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yesterday to 15 months in prison for filing 79 false income-tax returns and claiming more than \$400,000 in bogus refunds.

Oct. 04, 2013

Oct. 02 — Despite a plea from her attorney, a 34-year-old mother of four was sentenced yesterday to 15 months in prison for filing 79 false income-tax returns and claiming more than \$400,000 in bogus refunds.

Akiesha Ball of Columbus, Ohio, pleaded guilty in April to one count of preparing fraudulent returns in her own name and the names of others between 2008 and 2011.

An Internal Revenue Service investigation found that she created false W-2 forms and used them to file tax returns with inflated refunds that listed fake credits and deductions. The IRS paid out \$260,624 in bogus refunds, which Ball shared with people whose taxes she prepared.

U.S. District Judge Michael H. Watson ordered her to repay the government that amount.

Joseph E. Scott, Ball's attorney, pleaded with Watson before the sentencing to put Ball on house arrest for 18 months followed by five years of probation. Scott detailed Ball's chaotic life, noting that her father had been in and out of prison, her grandmother had raised her, she was biracial in a "lily-white" community, and she had mental and drug problems as a teenager.

Scott said Ball began using cocaine at the age of 14 and was addicted to marijuana. She is bipolar with panic, attention-deficit and anti-social personality disorders, according to her sentencing memorandum.

Scott said that, in the last six months, Ball has seen counselors regularly, taken

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The sentencing memorandum said she has held jobs that included loan officer, collection agent and exotic dancer.

Watson said he would permit Ball to self-surrender to prison so she can make arrangements for her children.

As she was leaving the courtroom, he gave her a final warning.

“If you go out and use (drugs), I’m going to have you picked up,” he said. “Use this time wisely.”

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Income Tax

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