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Aug. 22, 2014

A San Antonio woman was sentenced Thursday to 37 months in federal prison for pilfering nearly \$300,000 from the payroll taxes of a local printing company.

Monica R. Richardson, 39, asked U.S. District Judge Orlando Garcia to give her probation, but the judge declined after hearing that The Watermark Group had to let go other employees as a result of her actions.

Richardson apologized for her actions to some employees who attended her sentencing. She added that it was a "very severe mistake, and not a day goes by that I don't think about it."

Richardson was a controller for the firm and began embezzling in 2002 by preparing and cashing extra payroll checks to herself, her plea deal said.

She then deleted the checks from Watermark's accounting system, and rather than submit payroll taxes and related information, she stalled the IRS when it inquired. Her activity continued for a few years and totaled \$287,029, the plea deal said.

Her lawyer, Daniel McCarthy, told the judge that Richardson used the money to buy household items that she otherwise could not afford.

McCarthy added that the company obtained a civil judgment against Richardson of \$302,000 and Watermark's insurance company obtained a separate judgment of about \$55,000 against her.

Prosecutor Bill Harris noted that the insurance company did not cover the entire amount Richardson stole.

The judge ordered Richardson to pay the remaining \$65,531 in restitution and to

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Richardson, who is also known as Monica R. Ortegon, also pleaded no contest to

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