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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Jan. 10, 2023



Two tax preparers in North Carolina were sentenced to prison this week for preparing false tax returns for clients and causing them to be filed with the IRS.

According to court documents and statements made in court, from approximately 2009 through 2018 Betty Hawkins, 51, and Phyllis Ricks, 63, both of Rocky Mount, conspired with others to file false tax returns for clients of the tax preparation businesses where they worked.

These returns included fictitious federal income tax withholding figures as well as other fraudulent items that generated fraudulent refunds for the clients. In total, Hawkins, Ricks and their co-conspirators caused more than 1,000 false tax returns to

be filed with the IRS that claimed a total of approximately \$5 million in fraudulent

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Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney Michael F. Easley for the Eastern District of North Carolina made the announcement.

IRS-Criminal Investigation investigated the case.

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