



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Ripley man sentenced to prison on food stamp fraud charges filed by OIU agents

(Columbus) – A Ripley man was sentenced on March 20 in Brown County Court of Common Pleas to three-years in prison for illegal use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, money laundering and drug trafficking.

Agents with the Ohio Investigative Unit charged David Kilgore, 51, of Ripley, in June 2013 after conducting a long-term investigation at the Red Oak General Store, 6106 U.S. Route 62 also in Ripley. Agents were able to determine that Kilgore was allowing customers to receive cash and purchase drugs with their SNAP benefits, and in return he would use the benefits to purchase items to be resold in his store.

During the course of the investigation, agents also cited the Red Oak General Store's liquor permit with 14 counts of illegal use of EBT; four counts of trafficking in EBT; and one count each of drug possession, drug paraphernalia possession, and illegal possession of EBT. The administrative charges will be presented to the Ohio Liquor Control Commission for their consideration. The commission has the authority to issue a fine, suspension or revocation of the liquor permit.

During the investigation, agents worked closely with the Brown County Prosecutor's Office and the Brown County Sheriff.

In February, Tina Adams, 33, also of Ripley, was sentenced in Brown County Court of Common Pleas to two-years of probation, a suspended driver license and court fines for illegal use of SNAP benefits and aggravated possession of drugs.

The following individuals all plead guilty in Brown County Municipal Court to attempted illegal use of SNAP benefits: Ricky Bowman, 52, of Winchester was sentenced to one-year of probation, 80 hours of community service and court fines; Heather Hazelbaker, 23, also of Winchester was ordered to pay court costs; Tonya Amburgey, 42, of Russellville, was ordered to pay court costs; and Heather Amburgey, 22, also of Russellville, was sentenced to 60 days in jail suspended, 80 hours community service, one-year probation and court costs.

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The Ohio Investigative Unit agents are plain-clothed fully sworn peace officers. OIU is charged with enforcing the state's liquor laws and is the only state law enforcement agency specifically tasked with investigating food stamp fraud crimes. Agents also investigate tobacco violations.

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