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Grandmother and Granddaughter sentenced for Welfare Fraud

On October 26, 2012, 26-year-old Iriel Washington and her 73-year-old grandmother, Pauline Washington, both of Anchorage, were convicted for fraudulently applying for and receiving Alaska Public Assistance benefits. Superior Court Judge Michael Spaan sentenced Iriel Washington to 48 months jail with 43 months suspended and six years of probation. Judge Spaan sentenced Pauline Washington five years of formal probation and 120 hours of Community Work Service. Judge Spaan also ordered them \$22,760.00 in restitution to the State of Alaska.

The convictions stem from an investigation conducted by the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) Fraud Investigation Unit. The investigation revealed that from October 2009 through June 2011, Iriel Washington was incarcerated as a result of a Federal felony conviction. Despite her granddaughter's incarceration, Pauline Washington, as Iriel's authorized representative and in cooperation with Iriel, applied for and received various Public Assistance benefits, including Cash Assistance and Food Stamps, totaling \$22,760.00.