

*Jackie Lacey*  
District Attorney  
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

**Media Contact:**

Jane Robison, Assistant Chief  
Media Relations Division  
213-257-2000  
[JRobison@da.lacounty.gov](mailto:JRobison@da.lacounty.gov)  
Twitter: @LADAOoffice

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**Accountant, Co-Defendant Plead to Embezzling  
From County Foster Homes**

A Long Beach accountant pleaded guilty today to embezzling money from several county foster homes, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Gary Batchelor, 64, pleaded guilty to two felony counts of misappropriation of public funds and one felony count of filing a false tax return in two separate cases. The group homes were operated by You Are the Difference Foundation and Moore's Cottage. They were located in Compton, Los Angeles, Altadena and Pomona and served boys ages 13 to 18.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge George Lomeli is expected to sentence Batchelor to three years in state prison when he returns on Jan. 13, 2017, for sentencing. In addition, Batchelor will be ordered to pay \$356,435 in restitution, including \$40,329 to the state Franchise Tax Board and \$193,865 to You Are the Difference Foundation.

Co-defendant Steven Smith, 56, the former executive director at Moore's Cottage, pleaded guilty to one felony count each of embezzlement and failure to file a tax return. He was immediately sentenced to 30 days in county jail and placed on formal probation for five years. He also was ordered to pay \$30,171 in restitution, including \$23,942 to the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and \$6,229 to the state Franchise Tax Board.

Batchelor and Smith were charged in case BA435627 in 2015 with embezzling money from Moore's Cottage between June 2011 and October 2013. At the time, Batchelor was a board member and chief financial officer at Moore's Cottage and Smith was executive director.

Batchelor was indicted by a Grand Jury in April for stealing from the You Are the Difference Foundation homes in case BA443706.

Deputy District Attorney Dana Aratani with the Public Integrity Division prosecuted both cases.

The cases were investigated by the Long Beach Police Department, the Los Angeles County Auditor-Controller and the California Franchise Tax Board.

**[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.