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**DISBARRED LAWYER PLEADS GUILTY TO LARCENY CHARGES**  
**FOR SWINDLING DOZENS OF CLIENTS OUT OF MORE THAN \$1.8 MILLION**

*Approximately 50 Victims Scammed Out of Personal Injury Settlement Funds;  
Defendant Faces Up to 4 1/2 Years in Prison at Sentencing*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that former lawyer Yohan Choi, 47, has pleaded guilty to grand larceny for bilking more than 50 clients – whom he represented before and after he was barred from practicing law.

District Attorney Katz said, “As a member of the bar, this defendant took an oath to uphold the law. Unfortunately, his greed overpowered his sense of duty and between August 2015 and August 2020 he failed to turn over more than \$1.8 million to clients who had settled personal injury claims. The defendant has pleaded guilty and now will be held accountable for his crimes.”

Choi, of 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in Bayside, Queens, operated a law office on Northern Boulevard in Flushing and was charged in two separate criminal complaints. Yesterday the defendant pleaded guilty to grand larceny in the fourth degree before Queens Criminal Court Judge Eugene Guarino. Judge Guarino set the sentencing for April 6, 2022 and indicated he will order Choi to serve 1 ½ to 4 ½ years in prison. At the time of his plea, defendant Choi signed 28 confessions of judgment to repay in excess of \$1.8 million to make his victims whole.

According to the charges, the defendant held bank accounts for his law practice at several financial institutions, including Chase, Capitol One and HSBC. A forensic examination of these accounts showed dozens of deposits for lawsuit settlements on behalf of Choi’s clients.

DA Katz said, according to Court records, in November 2016 a woman the defendant represented in a personal injury lawsuit agreed to settle the case for \$52,500. The victim was entitled to just over \$35,000, however, she never received any money from the settlement.

Another female client of Choi’s settled her lawsuit in May of 2018 for \$75,000. After the lawyer’s fee and other expenses were deducted the victim should have received just over \$50,000. Choi never turned over that money, despite the insurance company depositing a check totaling \$75,000 into his account.

Continuing, the DA said, a man who also hired the defendant to represent him in a personal injury case agreed to settle for \$45,000 and was entitled to receive \$30,150. The investigation showed that Choi’s bank

account received a check from the insurance company for \$45,000 on May 12, 2020. Three days later, though, that same escrow account balance totaled just \$423. The victim never received the money he was due.

According to the charges, the defendant repeated this scheme at least 50 times over the course of five years. Clients due varying sums of money – from as little as \$1,000 to more than \$50,000 – were left empty-handed. In all these instances, the defendant’s business accounts show the checks were deposited – totaling more than \$1.8 million - but his victims were never issued a check they were due.

Choi’s license to practice law was suspended in November 2017.

Assistant District Attorney Khadijah Muhammad-Starling, Bureau Chief of the DA’s Public Corruption Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard Brave.

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