

# Nearly \$7 million in civil penalties secured against criminal enterprises involving human trafficking

A group of Superior Court judgments issued on April 22 impose a total of \$6.79 million in civil penalties against a Middletown pawn shop and its operators for violations of Delaware's racketeering statute. The Department of Justice's Civil Division secured the judgment as the outcome of a [2017 civil racketeering complaint](#) filed against Gold Fever Pawn Shop on Broad Street in Middletown.

In August 2016, following an investigation dubbed "[Operation Golden Eye](#)", 23 individuals, including the operators and owner of Gold Fever Pawn Shop in Middletown, Shaun Reilly, his wife Kisha Reilly, and his mother, Denise Toy, were indicted on multiple charges including racketeering, conspiracy to commit racketeering, and organized retail theft. The State alleged that the Reillys and Toy enlisted shoplifters to steal items from area retailers, storing the stolen merchandise at Toy's home, and selling the stolen merchandise at the pawn shop and online.

In addition to criminal charges against the Reillys and Toy—all of whom pleaded guilty in early 2017 to crimes including Felony theft, Conspiracy, Criminal Solicitation, and weapons charges—DOJ pursued civil penalties under the Delaware Organized Crime and Racketeering Act (also known as the State RICO Act).

The Court's judgment answers that pursuit with monetary penalties of \$6.4 million against Gold Fever, LLC and Gold Fever Finance, LLC; \$350,000 against Shaun Reilly; and \$40,000

against Denise Toy. The judgment further orders forfeiture of assets seized during the criminal investigation preceding the civil action and a lien on the residence connected with the underlying criminal conduct. DAGs Oliver Cleary and Angeline Kogut led the case for the DOJ with support from paralegal Shirley Dupree, former paralegal Lauren Stickels and DOJ Law Clerk Kayla Renshaw.

A [separate Superior Court judgment](#) imposes a civil penalty of \$126,000 in connection with a first-of-its-kind racketeering suit. An earlier [Superior Court judgment](#) found Da Zhong Wang, formerly of Smyrna, liable for three racketeering violations after the State successfully demonstrated that he had profited from prostitution through a series of brothels he owned and operated in Middletown, Smyrna, Dover, and Rehoboth Beach. The racketeering suit represented the first use of Delaware's civil RICO statute in a human trafficking case. The most recent judgment against Wang include \$40,000 civil penalties for each of his three racketeering violations, in addition to \$6,000 in attorneys' fees. Deputy Attorney General Oliver Cleary, who led the DOJ's initial filing in 2016, secured the ruling with assistance and support from Deputy Attorney General Zoe Plerhoples and paralegal Shirley Dupree.