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## **Bail bond company fined for licensing violations**

JOHN STARK / THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

BELLINGHAM - The owner of Lucky Bail Bonds and an employee of the company have been hit with fines for violating state licensing requirements.

Eric Arps, president of Lucky, and employee Colleen Schmertz have agreed to pay the fines and waive their rights to a hearing on the matter.

The fines were imposed by the Washington Insurance Commissioner. In orders filed July 12, 2011, the commissioner's office asserts that Schmertz completed and signed 22 bail bonds between Sept. 10 and Oct. 13, 2010, before her license to write the surety insurance bonds had been obtained.

In so doing, she signed a document that stated "I certify under penalty of perjury that I am a licensed bail bond agent for Lucky Bail Bonds, and that I am executing this bond."

The state agency also asserts that Schmertz signed the documents at Arps' behest.

Arps is also accused of signing off on power-of-attorney forms for clients that had actually been filled out by Schmertz, in violation of state law.

For Arps, the state has imposed an \$11,000 fine, with half that amount suspended on condition he commits no similar violations for the next two years. For Schmertz, the fine is \$1,000, with \$500 suspended.

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