

Fraudulent accountant blasted for sticky fingers

[CBC News](#) Posted: Jun 18, 2010 4:43 PM NT Last Updated: Jun 18, 2010 5:42 PM NT

Jacqueline Joan Feltham sentenced in provincial court today

Rosie Mullaley rmullaley@thetelegram.com

Published: July 28, 2010, midnight **Updated:** Sept. 30, 2017, 5:58 a.m.

Jacqueline Joan Feltham was sentenced to two years less a day in provincial court this morning.

Once her term has been served, she will be on two years' probation.

As part of the sentence, Judge David Orr ordered a restitution order, which means Feltham must repay the money she defrauded from the organizations.

However, because she's declared bankruptcy, that money is tied up with creditors.

Representatives from the organizations — Brighter Futures, the Natural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador and Friends of the Garden — were in court to see Feltham led out in handcuffs.

Outside court, they expressed relief that the process is finally over and said they were determined to recover from the damage Feltham has caused them.

Feltham, 53, pleaded guilty to charges of theft over \$5,000 from the Natural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador; fraud over \$5,000 from Brighter Futures; and fraud over \$5,000 and breach of trust in relation to Friends of the Garden.

From 2003 to 2008, Feltham was Brighter Future's sole auditor and financial adviser, providing bookkeeping, accounting, auditing and consulting services. Between November 2005 and September 2008, she forged 231 cheques.

During much of that time, Feltham was also treasurer of the Natural History Society — which promotes the enjoyment and protection of wildlife and natural history resources — and Friends of the Garden, a volunteer charity that supports Memorial University's Botanical Garden.

She misappropriated tens of thousands of dollars from both groups' bank accounts without members' knowledge.

In total, she defrauded Brighter Futures of \$214,632.68, the Natural History Society of \$14,927.14, and Friends of the Garden of \$33,187.70.

"The frauds were extensive," the judge said.

Feltham — an accountant who operated an accounting firm in Portugal Cove-St. Philip's — was suspended by the Certified General Accountants of Newfoundland and Labrador after she was charged.

During her sentencing hearing a few weeks ago, defence lawyer Erin Breen suggested the judge consider a two-year conditional sentence, meaning Feltham would serve her sentence at home.

But Crown prosecutor Ruth Wakeham recommended a three-year sentence.

In deciding on two years less a day, Orr compared what Feltham did to the crimes of the MHAs who were convicted as a result of the provincial government constituency spending scandal.

"She was in a position of trust, hired in a professional capacity," Orr said, "and she used it to carry out her fraudulent activity..."

"She was supposed to be making every effort to help her clients."

rgillingham@thetelegram.com

Source: <http://www.thetelegram.com/news/local/jacqueline-joan-feltham-sentenced-in-provincial-court-today-125869/>