

TRUMBULL COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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Conviction, sentence upheld in Menards robbery



The 11th District Court of Appeals on Monday, April 8, upheld the conviction and sentencing of a Warren woman who had robbed the Menards home improvement store in Bazetta Township in March 2022.

Pamela Lorraine, left, now 40, formerly of Oak Street SW, Warren, on Feb. 27, 2023, pleaded guilty to a third-degree robbery felony before Judge Cynthia Westcott Rice, who later sentenced her to a 30-month prison term.

In her appeal, Lorraine and her attorney claimed that ineffective counsel let her plead guilty despite lack of evidence in the case, and the trial court erred by sentencing appellant to a near-maximum term.

However, in a 12-page decision written by 11th District Judge Robert Patton, the appellate judges determined that Lorraine's guilty plea waived her right to challenge the conviction's merits, including the question of sufficient evidence. In addition, the judges dismissed the claim of ineffective assistance because the defendant did not demonstrate her plea was not given knowingly and voluntarily.

Joining Judge Patton in the decision were 11th District Judges Eugene A. Lucci and John J. Eklund. The appellate judges also advised the trial court the sentencing entry had a typographical error regarding the potential for an earned credit for early release. The judges instructed the trial court to issue a new sentencing entry in the Lorraine case to correct the language.

Lorraine, who is incarcerated at the Northeast Reintegration Center in Cleveland, is eligible for release in October 2025, according to prison records.

The appeal was argued by Assistant Prosecutor Ryan J. Sanders, representing the state. Lorraine was represented by attorney James R. Estridge of Ravenna.

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