

## Press Release

### Former Bank of O'Fallon executive pleads guilty to swindling \$2 million in check kiting fraud scheme

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

#### For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Illinois  
Lauren Barry Duncan, Public Affairs Officer  
[Lauren.Barry@usdoj.gov](mailto:Lauren.Barry@usdoj.gov)

**EAST ST. LOUIS, Ill.** – The former second-in-command of the Bank of O'Fallon appeared in federal court Monday to admit to charges for engaging in a fraud scheme to obtain more than \$2 million.

Andrew P. Blassie, 69, of St. Louis, pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud and one count of interstate transportation of security or funds obtained by fraud.

*"This conviction, secured shortly after Blassie's April 8 indictment, reflects the investigators' outstanding work and the Bank of O'Fallon's vital cooperation to dismantle the scheme. This result delivers swift justice for O'Fallon's residents and protects the integrity of our financial system," said U.S. Attorney Steven D. Weinhoeft. "He must face a serious consequence for betraying his clients, employer, family, and community."*

According to the indictment, Blassie served as the Executive Vice President for the Bank of O'Fallon and defrauded the bank out of \$1,972,887.67 in a check kite scheme from September 2023 through September 2024 during his employment.

Blassie admitted to falsely inflating the balance of his personal checking account at the Bank of O'Fallon by depositing checks he knew to be backed by non-sufficient funds. He deposited checks with non-sufficient funds from four personal accounts at three other banks and one credit union into the Bank of O'Fallon account.

*"The level of corruption the defendant in this case achieved was beyond shameful. Rather than serve the Bank of O'Fallon and its customers, the defendant chose to serve himself – to more than \$2 million. His guilty plea today should send a message to others who would seek to rip off their unsuspecting customers that they will be caught, and they will be held accountable," Resident Agent in Charge Michael Kurzeja, of the U.S. Secret Service Springfield Office said. "I thank all of our Federal, state and local partners who helped in the successful prosecution of this former bank executive."*

Blassie paid nearly \$2.7 million for personal expenses from the falsely inflated account thus using funds belonging to the Bank of O'Fallon. As the former Executive Vice President, Blassie used his position to conceal his fraud from the Bank of O'Fallon by scrubbing his name and account number from the suspected kiting reports.

*"This former bank executive abused his position of trust and the trust of the community for personal enrichment," said Special Agent in Charge Vincent R. Zehme, of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Office of Inspector General (FDIC OIG), Chicago Region. "The FDIC OIG is pleased to*

*join our law enforcement partners in announcing today's guilty plea, and we remain committed to investigating and holding bank insiders who commit fraud accountable, as we seek to preserve the integrity of our Nation's banking system and to protect depositors and financial consumers."*

From August 2022 through September 2024, Blassie also persuaded a couple from Lebanon, Illinois, to give him \$489,000 of their retirement savings. In return for this investment, Blassie gave the couple two promissory notes. He agreed to pay the couple interest on the notes and used money he obtained through his check kite scheme to pay some of that interest.

As security for his promissory notes, Blassie pledged 128 of his and his wife's shares of the holding company which owns the Bank of O'Fallon.

*"Andrew Blassie abused his position of trust as a bank executive by committing fraud for his own personal gain and has now been brought to justice for his actions," said Jon Ellwanger, Special Agent in Charge, Western Region, Office of Inspector General for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. "We are proud to have worked with our law enforcement partners to achieve this plea agreement."*

According to the indictment, Blassie later sold most of these shares and did not use those funds to repay the Lebanon couple. This left the couple with no means of recourse when Blassie later defaulted on the promissory notes.

*"The Federal Housing Finance Agency, Office of Inspector General (FHFA-OIG) is committed to investigating allegations of fraud involving bank officials who abuse their position of public trust and financial institutions, particularly the Federal Home Loan Banks," said Korey Brinkman, Special Agent in Charge of the FHFA-OIG's Central Region. "We are proud to have partnered with the U.S. Secret Service, FDIC OIG, FRB OIG, and the O'Fallon (IL) Police Department on this case."*

Officials with the Bank of O'Fallon have fully cooperated with law enforcement during the investigation. Blassie's sentencing is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 18 at the federal courthouse in East St. Louis.

The O'Fallon Police Department, U.S. Secret Service, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Office of Inspector General, the Office of Inspector General for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and the Federal Housing Finance Agency, Office of Inspector General made contributions to the investigation.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Scott Verseman and Zoe Gross are prosecuting the case.

*Updated May 20, 2025*