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Fort Wayne man ordered to pay \$2.2 million to investors

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Bradley Collins of Fort Wayne was ordered Friday to repay investors \$2.2 million after pleading guilty to selling unregistered investments in what has been described by officials as a Ponzi scheme.

"Collins worked under the guise of a religious man and told his victims he only worked with God-fearing, church going people and was blessed to be blessing potential investors," Indiana Secretary of State Connie Lawson said in a statement Friday. "His portrayal of a Christian man put many of his victims at ease, increasing the amount of funds they invested."

She said 129 victims have been identified, with 59 of them living in Allen County.

Collins pleaded guilty in March to selling unregistered securities. As part of that guilty plea, Collins, of the 7700 block of Wohama Drive, must offer testimony in other criminal cases, including ones brought by the federal government.

He was charged in October with corrupt business influence, money laundering, selling unregistered securities, being an unregistered broker/dealer of securities and five counts of securities fraud. In exchange for his guilty plea, the additional charges will be dismissed when he is sentenced.

The plea agreement calls for a sentence of two years in prison, work release or on home detention, according to court documents.

Investigators have said they believe Collins and David McQueen engaged in a Ponzi scheme using religious affinity to close the deal with investors. They estimated that Indiana victims of Collins and McQueen have lost more than \$30 million, according to an earlier story in The Journal Gazette.

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