



# Sharen Wilson Criminal District Attorney



## For Immediate Release

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## Prosecuting Financial Crimes

(Fort Worth, TX) – Elder Financial Fraud. Money Laundering. Construction Fraud. Abuse of Office. Official Oppression.

These are among the crimes that occur in Tarrant County and throughout the country.

The Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office on Friday, October 21, hosted a day long advanced training event on these topics and others – including how to think outside the box to investigate and prosecute these cases – to help police officers, banking officials, credit union officers and more understand what to do when these crimes occur.

Around 100 peace officers and representatives of financial institutions attended the training at the Hurst Conference Center. There, prosecutors with the TCCDA's Office were among those who taught classes about topics ranging from employee theft and computer fraud to public integrity laws and elder financial fraud.

Speakers from the Texas Financial Crimes Intelligence Center and Adult Protective Services also taught about skimmers and other digital intercept data breaches and understanding Adult Protective Services Reports.

"Financial crimes are devastating for victims," said Assistant Criminal District Attorney Lori Varnell, who heads the Elder Financial Fraud Team. "That is why CDA Sharen Wilson wanted to provide training to help financial institutions see the patterns of financial crime and investigators to track down the necessary evidence for successful prosecutions and good outcomes for victims."

Fraud cases are much more prevalent today than they were years and decades ago, said Becky Krell, manager of the customer solutions department at the Tarrant County Credit Union.

"The world is changing rapidly, with bitcoin, electronic check fraud, and this training helps us identify and deal with that kind of fraud to protect our customers," Krell said, adding that they see fraud cases every day. "This training is teaching me so I can teach my department on how to deal with the member, so they report the fraud to police and to the Criminal District Attorney's Office."

Peace officers also said the training was valuable.

"We are getting new tools, learning how to get better evidence from our victims to help the prosecutors build stronger fraud cases that net convictions," said Ashleigh Casey, assistant police chief in Southlake.

Luis Torres, an investigator with the Hurst Police Department, agreed.

"This is important knowledge to do a better job investigating our fraud cases, day by day," he said. "I am the first person who comes in contact with our victims, so hearing these presentations ... is extremely helpful for me to get information to our detectives."