

\$300,000 Theft Proven

DA Secures Sentence in Elder Exploitation Case

About Schenectady County DA's Office

The Schenectady County District Attorney's Office in New York operates at the forefront of law enforcement, and its Financial Crimes Unit is responsible for investigating complex fraud, theft, and exploitation cases. Justin Colarossi, a Financial Crimes Analyst and Digital Forensics Specialist, leads investigations focusing on digital forensics, money laundering, and tracing funds through complex accounts. With 18 years of investigative experience, his mission is to follow the flow of funds to identify not just the mid-level criminals but also those at the top of the criminal organization and ultimately, the perpetrators behind the financial crimes tied to the network.

The Challenge: Race Against Time to Stop \$300,000 in Theft

The DA's office took on a critical elder abuse case involving a daughter who held Power of Attorney (POA) for her veteran father, a victim suffering from dementia in a nursing home. Instead of using the funds for the father's care, the daughter rapidly liquidated the victim's life savings for her own enrichment. The team was under immediate pressure to build a financial case while the exploitation was ongoing. To secure a conviction and stop the hemorrhaging of funds, the team faced multiple constraints:



- **Financial Catastrophe:** The daughter stole over \$300,000 from her father's retirement accounts, spending every dime and causing the nursing home bills to lapse for months. The theft was so complete it led to the family home being lost to a tax foreclosure.
- **Massive Data Spike:** The exploitation lasted almost six years, with the money moving fast (retirement checks could be spent within minutes). The overall investigation required reviewing records dating back to 2019.
- **Auditor Bottleneck:** Without Valid8, processing years of records and checks would have taken the analyst alone "three to four weeks" of dedicated time. Given a caseload of 82 cases, the time delay could easily extend to "two or three, four months" if outsourced to an auditor.

Solution: Valid8 as a Force Multiplier Tool

Faced with massive data volume and a high-stakes time constraint, the office leveraged their forensic investigation platform, Valid8. By automating time consuming data processing and financial tracing functions, Valid8 transformed the investigation from a multi-month manual bottleneck into a rapid, actionable case.

- **Rapid Case Acceleration:** Valid8 completed the data processing and reconciliation in just two days of analyst time. The analyst credited the platform with saving him months of work.
- **Automated Fraud Tracing:** The platform traced the rapid cash flow, identifying funds that came in (e.g., retirement checks) and were immediately moved to the daughter's mobile payment app (Cash App) and then spent in a flurry of frivolous purchases.



\$300,000 Theft Proven

DA Secures Sentence in Elder Exploitation Case

- **Check Matching & Visualization:** Valid8 automatically matched the checks and provided images. The analyst used custom visualization categories to expose the blatant spending, including a new Mercedes and expensive fur coats, while her father's bill was left unpaid.

| The Results: Speed, Certainty and Justice

Valid8 provided the Schenectady DA's office with the irrefutable evidence needed to build a winning case, reducing the total investigation time to a swift one year, compared to the typical two to three years for financial crimes.

Outcome	Impact
Felony Conviction Secured	The daughter received a rare, high sentence for a financial crime: two and a third to seven years in state prison.
Investigation Time Compressed	The DA's office brought the case to sentencing in one year, which is rare for financial crimes.
Fraud & Exploitation Proven	Clear evidence was produced showing the daughter robbed her father of over \$300,000 and caused the loss of the family home.
Resource Efficiency	Valid8 saved the analyst months of dedicated work, allowing him to maintain a massive caseload of 82 cases.

"IT ISN'T HARD. ANYONE CAN DO IT. AND FOR US, YOU JUST CAN'T GET A SOLUTION ELSEWHERE THAT WORKS AS WELL, ESPECIALLY WITH THE CHECK MATCHING AND EASE OF USE."

JUSTIN COLAROSS,
FINANCIAL CRIMES ANALYST AND DIGITAL FORENSICS SPECIALIST

| Strategic Imperative

For government agencies facing complex financial crimes, Valid8 is a necessity. It empowers analysts to bypass manual bottlenecks and leapfrog forensic delays, providing rapid, defensible answers that accelerate investigations and significantly increase solving rates. The platform is the non-negotiable tool for any financial crimes unit focused on holding perpetrators accountable.

