

Lawyer sentenced to jail for felonies

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A Ventura defense attorney was sentenced to 240 days in jail on Monday after he pleaded guilty to six felony charges and a misdemeanor last month.

Mark Stein pleaded guilty to two counts of grand theft, second-degree commercial burglary, ID theft, forgery and transportation of methamphetamine, and to being under the influence of methamphetamine, a misdemeanor.

Ventura County Superior Court Judge Bruce Clark also put him on three years probation and ordered that he pay

restitution to his victims.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Karen Wold asked the judge to sentence Stein to a year behind bars as recommended in the sentencing report prepared by the probation department.

"We are concerned that he is going to reoffend, which is why we thought more time would be better," she said.

Clark gave Stein 95 days jail credit and 46 days good-time jail credit.

Stein, dressed in orange and blue jail garb, stood inside a holding cage in the courtroom. He said he was "stunned" when he read the probation report.

He complained that he is in a 6-foot by 12-foot cell for 23 hours a day with no contact and is not allowed to play chess. He said the TV is 50 feet away.

"It's not pleasant," he said.

He expressed remorse and admitted he had a drug and gambling problem and is "trying to pick up the pieces of my life." He said he wants to get out to see his two children.

Leiderman said Stein will not be allowed to practice law.

Stein, 40, a former deputy public defender, stole personal information and wrote counterfeit checks to himself, apparently to feed his drug and gam-

bling habit, according to court documents.

Detained during a traffic stop in Oxnard earlier this year, Stein was found in possession of a controlled substance, authorities said. He stole personal information, deposited fraudulent checks in his accounts and withdrew large sums before the bank could detect the fraud, according to an affidavit. The money was later spent at casinos, authorities said.

In October, Stein was arrested on suspicion of drug use after he arrived several hours late for a court hearing in which he was the defense attorney.