

## **Police: Darien Man, 38, Arrested on NY Grand Larceny Charges and for Not Appearing in Court in CT**

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A 38-year-old Darien man arrested in town on his birthday last month had failed to appear in court in Connecticut and was wanted in Suffolk County, New York, Darien police said.

Authorities had issued warrants for his arrest in both states, according to Darien police, who arrested Dritan Hoti of Old Kings Highway South on Dec. 19.

He seems not to have contested extradition. His highest bond in Connecticut was reduced to \$50,000, which he paid. Hoti appeared in Suffolk County criminal court the day after Christmas. His next court date there is Feb. 13.

Hoti was charged by Suffolk County police on Long Island with felony grand larceny and issuing a bad check, stemming from a single case involving an incident on June 6, according to a New York state judicial website.

Suffolk County officials were willing to apply for extradition on an active warrant on the third-degree grand larceny charge (which, under New York state law involves an accusation of taking more than \$3,000) and the charge of issuing a bad check, a misdemeanor involving knowingly writing a check with insufficient funds.

Darien police described what happened with this account, including accusations not proven in court (court information from the Connecticut Judicial Branch website and a similar New York state website have been added to the police account):

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Aware of the New York and Connecticut arrest warrants, town police staked out Hoti's Darien home, and at 9:42 a.m. a police officer saw Hoti and a 32-year-old woman with the same last name get in Hoti's black Dodge pickup truck. The woman started driving east on Old King's Highway South.

At the intersection with Corbin Drive, police stopped the truck, which had license plates belonging to a blue Mercedes Benz Sprinter van. The woman was given a verbal warning not to drive without a driver's license and released. Dristan Hoti was taken into custody.

At approximately 09:30 hrs., an officer observed Hoti and a second subject exit the residence and enter a black Dodge pick-up and begin traveling east on Old Kings Hwy. South.

The marker plate on the pick-up belonged to a blue Mercedes Benz Sprinter van. A traffic stop was then initiated near the intersection of Corbin Drive and Old Kings Highway South.

The front seat passenger was identified through his CT State driver's license as Dritan Hoti.

Hoti said he had bought the truck and had taken license plates from another vehicle he owned. He said the truck wasn't properly registered and he couldn't produce proof that it was insured. He was immediately arrested on the outstanding failure-to-appear-in-court warrants, which had been piling up in recent months.

He had failed to appear in state Superior Court in Norwalk stemming from March 8 motor vehicle charges including driving with a suspended license and failing to have his insurance card with him.

(Those charges appear to be from New Canaan police, who send their arrests to court in Norwalk. The Darien police announcement said some of the charges are from New Canaan. All the other cases are in Stamford or Suffolk County courts.)

On May 8, Darien police charged him with driving an unregistered motor vehicle and, once again, driving with a suspended license. On May 20, he was again charged with both violations by Darien police. On June 13, June 14, Aug. 2 and Nov. 2, he didn't appear in court. Eventually warrants were issued on three counts of second-degree failure to appear in court.

When Hoti was arrested on Dec. 19, he was charged with not having insurance on his truck, misusing a license plate and not registering the truck, which was towed away.

Hoti's court-set bond was initially set at \$500,000, and the next day he appeared in state Superior Court in Stamford the next day, where it was lowered.