

## ‘Runaway Swiss Businessman’ Pleads Guilty to Perjury in Court Filings

*By Natalie Posgate – (May 8, 2017) –* A Swiss businessman and former Dallas resident who was a fugitive abroad for nine months last year will plead guilty to one count of perjury in a federal bankruptcy proceeding, according to papers filed by his lawyers and the U.S. government late last week.



*Rudolf Suter*

Rudolf Suter’s possible plea date in Dallas federal court is May 25, but that date is not yet confirmed, according to someone close to the case.

A jury trial had been set for the week of May 30 in U.S. District Judge David Godbey’s court.

Once the court enters a sentence, Suter could be imprisoned for up to five years, the documents say. He will likely also be ordered to pay a \$250,000 fine.

The government also agrees to “dismiss all counts in all pending indictments” after sentencing,” the plea agreement says.

The prosecutor is Assistant U.S. Attorney David Jarvis, who declined to comment on the case. Suter’s lawyers, Gabriel Reyes and Stephen James Green of the Federal Public Defender’s Office, could not be reached for comment.

In February, a federal grand jury in Dallas indicted Suter, 66, for making false statements during his 2014 voluntary bankruptcy filing that he had closed multiple bank accounts in the United States and Europe in an effort to conceal his assets for a civil judgment against him, according to the Department of Justice’s website.

The truth, according to one of the government’s Thursday filings, is that Suter had closed “at least 14 bank accounts” in the U.S. and Europe within a year before he filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

The plea agreement is only the latest development in Suter’s legal troubles. His criminal case stems from his refusal to comply to court orders and discovery requests from an ongoing civil case that began in 2011 with a \$2 million judgment awarded against him by a Swiss arbitration panel.

The plaintiff in that case, Florida businessman Peter Denton, is yet to recover the judgment. After the arbitration, Suter moved to the U.S., and began living large in Dallas as the new CEO of an Irving optical company. Instead of paying



*Bob Allen*

the judgement, Suter chose instead to spend his money on luxury cars, world class travel and a half-million-dollar townhouse in Atlanta for his former mistress, Denton learned.

Dallas attorney Bob Allen, who represents Denton, said although he has not yet heard anything from Suter’s attorneys in terms of settling his client’s case, “Suter attempting to resolve Denton’s judgment is the only action he can take for leniency in his sentence” aside from “being a good inmate.”

Denton obtained an affirmation of the Swiss arbitration award from Judge Godbey in 2012. After Suter’s continued pattern of failing to meet basic court orders and discovery requests regarding his assets, Judge Godbey issued a warrant for Suter’s arrest when he failed to appear to a March 9, 2016 hearing to show cause for why he should not be held in civil contempt. >



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Denton and the court learned the next day that Suter boarded a flight to London instead of attending the hearing.

When Suter flew back to the U.S. nine months later, the first person to greet him was a federal marshal as he was going through customs in New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. He was swiftly taken into custody at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn and then transferred to Dallas a few weeks later.

When marshals escorted Suter to Dallas federal court on Jan. 6, there was one more waiting for him besides Denton's lawyers, who were there to pick up matters in their case.

It was Jarvis, the prosecutor, who served him with the criminal complaint tied to Thursday's plea agreement.

*The Texas Lawbook* was in the courtroom when it happened. Learn more about Suter's first orange jumpsuit-clad appearance in court [here](#).

*Spoiler alert: Suter had originally retained prominent white collar attorney Jeff Ansley as counsel, who promptly withdrew from the case after Suter did not "[satisfy] his obligations under the engagement letter with counsel," according to court documents.*

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