



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois*

*Patrick J. Fitzgerald
United States Attorney*

*Federal Building
219 South Dearborn Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-5300*

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www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln

PRESS CONTACTS:
AUSA Michelle Nasser (312) 469-6201
Randall Samborn (312) 353-5318

**U.S. CHARGES 11 CHICAGO AREA DEFENDANTS WITH FRAUDULENTLY
OBTAINING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS TOTALING \$255,000**

CHICAGO — Eleven Chicago area defendants have been charged separately with fraudulently obtaining thousands of dollars each in unemployment benefits from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), federal law enforcement officials announced today. In each case, the defendants allegedly lied about their eligibility for benefits, claiming to be unemployed when they were not, and fraudulently obtained benefits ranging from \$15,232 to \$41,764. Altogether, the charges allege that IDES was cheated out of more than \$255,000.

Five of the defendants were charged with felony mail fraud and six were charged with misdemeanor theft counts in 11 separate criminal informations or grand jury indictments filed late last week in U.S. District Court in Chicago. According to the charges, each defendant applied for unemployment insurance benefits, certified their continuing eligibility to receive payments, and collected unemployment insurance while gainfully employed in various occupations, including two U.S. Postal Service letter carriers.

In Illinois, unemployment insurance benefits are funded primarily by contributions from employers, with IDES' administrative costs funded primarily by the federal government. During periods of high unemployment, the U.S. Treasury also funds unemployment payments. Several of

the cases allege that after February 2009, federal stimulus money was provided under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act to expand unemployment insurance benefits.

“The unemployment insurance program is intended to provide financial assistance to workers who are unemployed due to lack of suitable work. The Office of Inspector General, along with our law enforcement partners, will continue to safeguard Department of Labor programs against fraud. We thank the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Postal Service’s Office of Inspector General for their efforts in this investigation,” said James Vanderberg, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

Thomas P. Brady, Inspector-in-Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Chicago, said: “Unemployment insurance benefits help bridge the gap for workers while they pursue employment opportunities. We must preserve the available funds for those who are legitimately entitled to benefits, while making sure that others who cheat the system are not allowed to benefit at the expense of those who are honestly deserving.”

Scott Caspall, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago office of the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, said: “At a time when unemployed citizens are in desperate need of benefits, it is unfortunate that certain individuals, not to mention Postal Service employees, have allegedly partaken of these benefits. The Postal Service does not tolerate criminal conduct by its employees and will take appropriate action to investigate and prosecute such behavior.”

The charges were announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. The federal agencies conducted the criminal investigations following referrals of suspected fraud from IDES.

In each case, restitution is mandatory and the felony mail fraud counts carry a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, while the misdemeanor theft counts carry a

maximum penalty of a year in prison and a \$100,000 fine. The indictments and information contain only charges and are not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The defendants and details of each case follow:

Nicholas G. Boulahanis, 36, of Algonquin, was charged with misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$19,440 in unemployment insurance payments that he was not entitled to receive while employed as a bricklayer at various times in 2007 and 2008. (Assistant U.S. Attorney Shoba Pillay);

Yolanda Davis, 36, of Chicago, was charged with felony mail fraud for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$41,000 in unemployment insurance payments that she was not entitled to receive while employed as a Postal Service letter carrier at the Pilsen and Roseland postal stations in Chicago between July 2008 and January 2010. Davis applied for unemployment benefits and allegedly claimed to be unemployed by the USPS for “lack of work” when, in fact, she was employed but had been suspended without pay; she then returned to work full time a week after submitting her application and continued collecting benefits while employed full time. (Special AUSA Stephen Rotter);

Reuvean Day, 43, of Park Forest, was charged with misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$25,398 in unemployment insurance payments that she was not entitled to receive while employed as an administrative support specialist at various times in 2007 and 2008. (AUSA John Kness);

Luis Diaz, 37, of Northlake, was charged with misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$17,477 in unemployment insurance payments that he was not entitled to receive while employed as a maintenance mechanic at various times in 2006 and 2007. (AUSA Jennie Levin);

Torenzo Dillon, 26, of Harvey, was charged with misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$19,548 in unemployment insurance payments that he was not entitled to receive while employed full time as a box maker at various times in 2007 and 2008. (AUSA Christopher Grohman);

Carlos Flores, 43, of Hainesville, was charged with one count of felony mail fraud and one count of misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$20,135 in unemployment insurance payments that he was not entitled to receive while employed at Computer Systems Institute, Inc., in 2008 and 2009. (AUSA Heather McShain);

Chantel Hannah, 42, of Chicago, was charged with misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$24,000 in unemployment insurance payments

that she was not entitled to receive while employed as a Postal Service letter carrier at the Roseland postal station in Chicago between 2008 and January 2010. (SAUSA Stephen Rotter);

Loretta Morris, 32, of Chicago, was charged with one count of felony mail fraud and one count of misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$15,232 in unemployment insurance payments that she was not entitled to receive while employed as a customer service representative and retail wireless consultant at various times in 2006 and 2007. (AUSA John Kness);

Todd Motton, 35, of Chicago, was charged with one count of felony mail fraud and one count of misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$20,947 in unemployment insurance payments that he was not entitled to receive while employed as a lift truck driver in 2007 and 2008. (AUSA Heather McShain);

Spirodon Vithoukas, 42, of Palos Hills, was charged with misdemeanor theft for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$16,188 in unemployment insurance payments that he was not entitled to receive while employed as a painter at various times in 2007 and 2008. (AUSA Peter Flanagan); and

Sanuelle Williams, 41, of Country Club Hills, was charged with three counts of felony mail fraud for allegedly fraudulently obtaining approximately \$34,187 in unemployment insurance payments that she was not entitled to receive while employed as an administrator from 2008 through January 2010. (AUSA Peter Flanagan).

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