

# Army Servicemember Stationed at Fort Bragg Indicted in Connection With Romance Scams and COVID-19 Assistance Fraud

Friday, March 3, 2023

## For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of North Carolina

RALEIGH, N.C. – Sanda G. Frimpong, 33, was arrested Wednesday upon the unsealing of a 19-count indictment that included charges of Money Laundering, Fraud, Conspiracy, Aggravated Identity Theft, and Access Device Fraud in connection with multiple interstate and international fraud and money-laundering scams. Frimpong, an active duty servicemember stationed at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, faces between up to ten and up to twenty years in prison per count, and potential fines.

“Online romance scams are increasingly targeting lonely, vulnerable, and often elderly victims,” stated US Attorney Michael Easley. “Our office is committed to seeking justice for fraud victims just as we are to prosecuting those who took advantage of programs intended to help unemployed and underemployed folks who struggled through the COVID-19 pandemic.”

According to the indictment, Frimpong and other conspirators, engaged in elaborate scams, impersonating romantic love interests, diplomats, customs personnel, military personnel, and other fictitious personas for the purpose of ensnaring their victims by earning their confidence, including promises of romance, sharing of an inheritance or other riches, or other scenarios intended to fraudulently induce the victims to provide money or property to the conspirators. Frimpong allegedly laundered hundreds of thousands of dollars in proceeds of these frauds through his various bank accounts across state lines and through contacts in Ghana.

Additionally, in a separate scam, according to the indictment, Frimpong and other conspirators fraudulently applied for unemployment assistance in various states, using stolen identities. This fraud included allegedly obtaining over \$100,000 in funds intended

for those struggling through the COVID-19 pandemic and made available via the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act").

Frimpong was indicted on three counts of money laundering; seven counts of wire fraud; three counts of mail fraud; one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud; three counts of aggravated identity theft; and two counts of access device fraud. Arraignment before United States District Judge James C. Dever III is scheduled to occur later this year.

Michael Easley, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina made the announcement after United States Magistrate Judge James E. Gates presided over Frimpong's Initial Appearance. Defense Criminal Investigative Service is leading the investigation with the assistance of the Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General, and Assistant U.S. Attorney David G. Beraka is prosecuting the case.

Related court documents and information can be found on the website of the [U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina](#) or on [PACER](#) by searching for Case No. 5-23-CR-35-D.

*An indictment is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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## Topics

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