

PRESS RELEASE

# Essex County Man Charged in Scheme to Fraudulently Obtain More Than \$4 Million from Government Programs

Monday, May 8, 2023

## For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey

NEWARK, N.J. – An Essex County, New Jersey, man was arrested this morning for his involvement in a scheme that obtained more than \$4 million in government funds, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger announced.

Gbenga Akinbode, 33, of Newark, New Jersey, is scheduled to appear today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Jessica S. Allen in Newark federal court and was released on \$300,000 bail.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

Akinbode opened a bank account in December 2020. Within a year, approximately 120 debit cards were used to purchase approximately \$500,000 in money orders that were deposited into the account. The investigation revealed that the debit cards had been funded with \$4 million in fraudulently obtained unemployment insurance benefits, Paycheck Protection Program loans and payments from the IRS.

The charge of wire fraud is punishable by a maximum potential penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of the greater of \$250,000, twice the gross profits or twice the gross loss suffered to the victims of his offense, whichever is greatest.

U.S. Attorney Sellinger credited special agents of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jonathan Mellone, Northeast Region, Postal Inspectors with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Newark, under the direction of Inspector in Charge Christopher A. Nielsen, Philadelphia Division,

and Special Agents with the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Special Agent in Charge Ricky J. Patel in Newark, with the investigation leading to the charge.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew Kogan of the U.S. Attorney's Office Cybercrime Unit in Newark.

The charge and allegations contained in the complaint are merely accusations and the defendant is considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

[akinbode.complaint.pdf](#) (252.68 KB)

*Updated May 8, 2023*

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## Topics

**CORONAVIRUS**

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## Component

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Press Release Number: 23-135