

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Massachusetts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Six Individuals Charged with Federal Identity Fraud Crimes Investigation by multi-agency fraud task force results in 50th arrest since July 2018

BOSTON – Six individuals were charged this week in connection with their misuse of stolen identities to obtain official identification documents and other government benefits. Of the six defendants charged, the true identities of four remain unknown.

According to charging documents, these individuals used Social Security numbers and other identifiers to obtain, for example, Massachusetts driver's licenses or identification cards or MassHealth benefits. Some of these stolen identities were also used to obtain Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

Antonio De Carvalho Vicente, 59, a Brazilian national illegally residing in Fall River, was charged with theft of government funds. De Carvalho Vicente allegedly submitted a fraudulent application for PUA benefits using another person's name and Social Security number. He allegedly received PUA payments and weekly payments of \$600 under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, although the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance later ceased payments after flagging a suspected identity issue.

Angel Bautista Rossi, 43, a Dominican national illegally residing in Lawrence, was charged with aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number.

A woman residing in Lawrence and whose true identity has not been confirmed, was charged as Jane Doe with aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number.

A man residing in Roxbury and whose true identity has not been confirmed, was charged as John Doe with theft of government funds, aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number.

A man residing in Roslindale and whose true identity has not been confirmed, was charged as John Doe with aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number.

A man residing in Lawrence and whose true identity has not been confirmed, was charged as John Doe with aggravated identity theft, false statement in a health care matter and false representation of a Social Security number.

“Identity fraud takes a tremendous toll on its victims,” said U.S. Attorney Andrew E. Lelling. “Individuals whose identities have been misused can face difficulties obtaining health care benefits, Social Security benefits or unemployment benefits, and are often left dealing with collateral consequences such as tax liability, bad credit and outstanding arrest warrants in their names. We will continue to hold accountable those engaged in identity fraud.”

“These arrests mark an important landmark in the fight to ensure that benefits owed to American citizens go to whom they belong and not to those illegally present in our country,” said Michael Shea, Acting Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston. “This is an important enforcement metric reached in the fight against benefit theft crimes, which are especially egregious during today’s these times of serious economic and public health concerns. Today’s achievement serves as testimony to the tireless, dedicated team work of those partners who make up the Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (DBFTF). We applaud all of our great partners including the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts, whose unprecedented commitment to prosecuting these crimes has never wavered.”

“The Medicaid program is a partnership between the federal government and the states to provide healthcare to some of the most vulnerable members of society,” said Phillip M. Coyne, Special Agent in Charge, Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Service’s Boston Regional Office. “Medical identity theft jeopardizes the safety of its victims while disregarding the taxpayers who ultimately bear the cost. We will continue to root out imposters whose actions threaten the integrity of our healthcare system.”

Since July 2018, 50 defendants have been charged in connection with document, identity and benefit fraud as a result of investigations by Homeland Security Investigation’s Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (DBFTF), a specialized investigative group comprising personnel from various state, local and federal agencies with expertise in detecting, deterring and disrupting organizations and individuals involved in various types of document, identity and benefit fraud schemes. The DBFTF investigates individuals who are believed to have obtained stolen identities of United States citizens living in Puerto Rico and who have used those identities to obtain documents and public benefits that they would not otherwise be eligible to receive.

The charge of aggravated identity theft provides for a mandatory two-year prison sentence that must run consecutively to any other sentence imposed, up to one year of supervised release and a fine of up to \$250,000. The charge of theft of government funds provides for a sentence of up to 10 years in

prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of false representation of a Social Security number provides for a sentence of up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based on the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

U.S Attorney Lelling; HSI Boston SAC Shea; HHS-OIG SAC Coyne; Tonya Perkins, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Boston Field Division; Christina Scaringi, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General, Northeast Regional Office; Michael Mikulka, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations; Jonathan Davidson, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service, Boston Field Office; Joseph W. Cronin, Inspector in Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; Denis C. Riordan, District Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Boston; Colonel Christopher Mason, Superintendent of the Massachusetts State Police; and Massachusetts State Auditor Suzanne M. Bump made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Lawrence, Lowell, Woburn, Dartmouth and Fall River police departments.

These cases are being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Karen Burzycki and Assistant U.S. Attorneys David Tobin and Kenneth Shine of Lelling's Major Crimes Unit.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.