

PRESS RELEASE

California Resident Sentenced To Prison For Committing Unemployment Insurance Benefits Fraud

Tuesday, July 25, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Nevada

LAS VEGAS – A Stockton, California, resident was sentenced today by United States District Judge Gloria M. Navarro to 27 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release for fraudulently using unemployment insurance benefits debit cards in other peoples' names without their authorization to withdraw thousands of dollars.

Breon Dante Mims (32) pleaded guilty to illegal transaction with access devices.

According to court documents, on September 20, 2020, officers from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department stopped Mims walking along Las Vegas Boulevard after observing him smoking a marijuana blunt in public. During the stop, officers found Mims in possession of \$10,080 in cash and 10 California Employment Development Department (EDD) debit cards issued in other names. He admitted that he possessed and used these EDD debit cards without authorization; and that he submitted the unemployment claims associated with the EDD debit cards without authorization. At least \$261,600 of unemployment benefits were approved, and Mims withdrew at least \$77,000 from various ATMs in Nevada and California using these fraudulently obtained EDD debit cards.

United States Attorney Jason M. Frierson for the District of Nevada and Special Agent in Charge Quentin Heiden of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG), Western Region made the announcement.

The DOL-OIG investigated the case. Assistant United States Attorney Jim Fang prosecuted the case.

In May 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF web complaint form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

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