

PRESS RELEASE

# Hospital Employee Sentenced to 3 Years in Prison for Using Patient Information to Steal Pandemic Unemployment Benefits

Friday, July 21, 2023

## For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of California

### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – July 21, 2023**

SAN DIEGO – Matthew George Lombardo was sentenced in federal court to 36 months in prison for using his position as a clerk at a local hospital to steal patient identifying information and pass the information on to others in an attempt to steal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits.

Lombardo pleaded guilty in September 2022. According to the government's sentencing memo, in August of 2020 Lombardo worked at a hospital as a Patient Service Representative where he had access to patient admission sheets, which included patient identifying information. Lombardo used that position to access that confidential patient information and provide it to a co-defendant for use in submitting PUA claims to the California Employment Development Department (EDD). Text messages between Lombardo and his co-defendants show they were looking for the most vulnerable victims. For example, on August 15, 2020, Lombardo texted a co-defendant "if you need social security numbers or anything I can pull that shit up at work." The government's sentencing memo further describes how Lombardo and his co-defendants deliberately took advantage of people in their most vulnerable state. For example, on August 22, 2020, Lombardo texted his co-defendant the name, date of birth, social security number, and address of a patient and wrote, "this guy died a few hours ago, how many names do we need?" The co-defendant texted back: "find me one who is still alive . . . someone 55 or younger who is on their way out."

In imposing a 36-month sentence U.S. District Judge Cathy Ann Bencivengo noted that Lombardo was stealing public assistance benefits intended to help people during a national emergency and said she found the text messages deliberately targeting hospital patients to be "callous."

*"During a national healthcare emergency, Mr. Lombardo stole the identities of hospital patients to defraud the government of funds intended for people in crisis," said U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman. "This office and our law enforcement partners are dedicated to pursuing such frauds and will hold the perpetrators accountable." Grossman thanked the prosecution team and investigating agencies who diligently pursued this case.*

"The DEA and its partners will continue to pursue justice for the citizens of San Diego," said DEA Special Agent in Charge Shelly Howe.

**DEFENDANT**  
**CAB**

**Case Number 21-CR-2154-**

Matthew George Lombardo

Age: 54

San Diego

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Count 1: Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud – Title 18, U.S.C., Section 1349

Maximum penalty: 20 years in prison

Counts 2 and 3: Aggravated Identity Theft – Title 18, U.S.C., Section 1028A

Maximum penalty: 2 years in prison

Count 4: Using Confidential Health Information for Personal Gain – Title 42, U.S.C., Section 1320d-6

Maximum penalty: 10 years in prison

**AGENCY**

Drug Enforcement Administration

United States Postal Inspection Service

United States Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General

California Employment Development Department Investigation Division

San Diego County Sheriff's Department

**Contact**

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*Updated July 21, 2023*

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**Topic**

**IDENTITY THEFT**

**Component**

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