

PRESS RELEASE

Convicted Felon Admits To Defrauding COVID-19 Programs While On Supervised Release

Friday, February 14, 2025

For Immediate Release

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

LAS VEGAS – A Las Vegas woman pleaded guilty yesterday to carrying out a scheme to fraudulently obtain more than \$137,000 from the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program (PUA), the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (EIDL).

Kelly Ann Mogavero, 55, pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for May 21, 2025, before United States District Judge Cristina D. Silva.

"Kelly Mogavero, a convicted felon recently released from prison, fraudulently collected unemployment insurance (UI) benefits intended for American workers who lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Quentin Heiden, Special Agent-in-Charge, Western Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. "Yesterday's guilty plea highlights our strong collaboration with the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Nevada and our law enforcement partners to ensure the integrity of the UI system and secure justice for the American taxpayer."

According to court documents and admissions made in court by Mogavero, from June 3, 2020, to June 23, 2021, she devised and carried out a scheme to defraud Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR), the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), and the Small Business Administration (SBA) in an attempt to fraudulently obtain \$137,600 in relief benefits from the PUA, PPP, and EIDL programs.

As part of the scheme, while she was under United States Probation's supervision, Mogavero fraudulently filed for unemployment insurance in both Nevada and Arizona and submitted at least two fraudulent applications for EIDLs and one fraudulent application for a PPP loan. Mogavero submitted materially false and fraudulent

information, including that she was the sole proprietor of several companies which did not in fact exist, for which she stated false revenue amounts, and—for one of the EIDL applications—a false number of employees. Mogavero also submitted falsified tax documents in support of each application. As a result of her scheme, Mogavero successfully obtained more than \$44,000 in relief benefits to which she was not entitled.

In October 2016, Mogavero was convicted of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine in the District of Nevada and she was sentenced to 46-months in custody followed by five years of supervision.

At sentencing, Mogavero faces a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison. A federal district court judge will determine the sentence of each defendant after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Sue Fahami, Special Agent in Charge Spencer L. Evans for the FBI Las Vegas Division, and Special Agent-in-Charge Quentin Heiden, Western Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG) made the announcement.

The FBI, DOL-OIG, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General Office of Investigations - COVID Fraud Unit, Office of Inspector General U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Office of Inspector General Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System Consumer Financial Protection Bureau investigated the case. Assistant United States Attorney Kimberly Frayn is prosecuting the case.

On May 17, 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 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 [Justice.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.justice.gov/Coronavirus) and [Justice.gov/Coronavirus/CombatingFraud](https://www.justice.gov/Coronavirus/CombatingFraud).

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 (NCDF) Hotline via the [NCDF Web Complaint Form](#).

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