

PRESS RELEASE

Former State Employee Sentenced for Taking Bribes to Approve Fraudulent Claims for Unemployment Insurance Benefits

Monday, June 16, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Michigan

DETROIT – A Detroit resident was sentenced today for her role in a scheme to steal unemployment assistance funds, announced United States Attorney Jerome F. Gorgon Jr. Danielle Moore, 41, was sentenced to 41 months in prison after having pleaded guilty to conspiring to engage in wire fraud.

Gorgon was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Cheyvoryea Gibson, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Detroit Field Division; Megan Howell, Special Agent-in-Charge, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Department of Labor-Office of Inspector General; and Megan Howell, Special Agent-in-Charge, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

Moore was sentenced by United States District Judge Susan K. DeClercq.

Moore was employed by the State of Michigan (SOM), Michigan Works Agency (MWA) and was assigned to work as a claims examiner for the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (MUIA) during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020. She admitted to taking bribes to process fraudulent claims. As a result of Moore's crimes, the State of Michigan paid out approximately \$1,507,057.08 in fraudulent unemployment claims that should have been disbursed to unemployed Americans during a historic time of need.

Moore was also ordered to pay \$1,507,057.08 in restitution.

United States Attorney Gorgon stated: "We remain committed to prosecuting those who choose to profit through the theft of government funds earmarked for those members of our community who are truly in need."

"Ms. Moore, as a former state employee, betrayed the public's trust by taking advantage of her position and conspiring to steal funds meant to support unemployed workers during a national crisis," said Cheyvoryea Gibson, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in Michigan. "Her actions were not only criminal but also a direct insult to the countless families and businesses struggling to survive the economic fallout of the pandemic. The FBI, along with our law enforcement partners, will continue to investigate and hold accountable anyone who chooses to defraud essential relief programs and exploit moments of national vulnerability for personal gain."

"Former State of Michigan employee Danielle Moore engaged in an unemployment insurance fraud scheme by facilitating the approval of at least 40 fraudulent claims for incarcerated individuals. Moore abused her position by accessing sensitive employment information and state data systems for her own personal financial gain. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate those who seek to exploit this critical benefit program, particularly when an insider threat is involved," said Megan Howell, Special Agent-in-Charge, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

"UIA holds its employees to lofty ethical standards. When a staff member breaks that trust for personal gain, it is particularly disappointing," said Jason Palmer, Director of the Michigan UIA. "Danielle Moore used her insider status to help steal money meant for fellow Michiganders who relied on their jobless benefits to survive. She failed her colleagues and failed the taxpayers of Michigan and is now being held accountable for her selfish acts."

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Timothy J. Wyse. The investigation was conducted jointly by the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Federal Bureau of Investigation's Detroit Area Public Corruption Task Force, and the Unemployment Insurance Agency, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

Updated June 16, 2025

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