

PRESS RELEASE

Griffin man charged with dogfighting and CARES Act fraud

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

NEWNAN, Ga. - Norman Dixon has been arraigned on federal charges of sponsoring and exhibiting a dog in an animal fighting venture, promoting an animal fighting venture, animal crushing, and wire fraud.

"The indictment alleges that Dixon viciously abused dogs and repeatedly lied to obtain COVID relief funds," said U.S. Attorney Theodore S. Hertzberg. "This depraved and deceitful conduct cannot be tolerated and commands aggressive prosecution."

"An important part of the mission of the Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of fraud involving the unemployment insurance program. This collaborative investigative effort with our federal partners reaffirms our commitment to investigate these types of allegations," said Mathew Broadhurst, Special Agent-in-Charge, Southeast Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

According to U.S. Attorney Hertzberg, the charges, and other information presented in court: Dixon is accused of sponsoring and exhibiting dogs in animal fighting ventures on seven occasions. He is also accused of promoting an animal fighting venture and purposefully suffocating a dog.

In addition to the dogfighting- and animal abuse-related offenses, Dixon was charged with defrauding the Small Business Administration and a commercial lender by corruptly obtaining Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans. The indictment alleges, among other untruths, that Dixon submitted a false tax form when obtaining the PPP loans and then lied again when seeking forgiveness for the PPP loans he received.

Finally, Dixon was charged with conducting Unemployment Insurance (UI) fraud by submitting fraudulent claims to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. The indictment alleges that, to steal UI benefits, Dixon filed false and fraudulent applications for UI benefits on behalf of himself and others.

Norman Dixon, 34, of Griffin, Ga., was arraigned on December 4, 2025, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Russell G. Vineyard. He was indicted by a federal grand jury on October 28, 2025.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges, and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of Inspector General and the U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alex Sistla and Samir Kaushal are 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, 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 (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

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