

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Immigration-Related Identity Theft Investigation Leads To Charges Against 18 Individuals**

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida

Tampa, Florida – Acting United States Attorney Sara C. Sweeney announces that 18 individuals have been charged as the result of an immigration-related identity theft investigation. Each has been charged with aggravated identity theft, misuse of Social Security numbers, and false statements regarding citizenship with the intent to engage unlawfully in employment. The attached summary chart provides additional information. If convicted on all counts, each faces a minimum penalty of two years, up to 12 years, in federal prison.

According to the indictments, the charged individuals, all foreign nationals with no lawful status in the United States, misused the names and Social Security numbers of others and falsely claimed to be United States citizens with the intent to engage unlawfully in employment.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed one or more violations of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

These cases were investigated by Homeland Security Investigations, the Department of Transportation – Office of Inspector General, the Social Security Administration – Office of the Inspector General, the United States Border Patrol, the Department of Labor – Office of Inspector General, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. They cases are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Karyna Valdes and Christopher F. Murray, and Special Assistant United States Attorney Joseph Wheeler, III.

***Each defendant was charged with aggravated identity theft, misuse of Social Security numbers, and making false statements for the purpose of unlawfully gaining employment in the United States.***

| <b>Name<br/>(Country of Origin)</b>                   | <b>Status</b>                             |
|---|---|
| <b>Luvin Daniel Hernandez Amador<br/>(Honduras)</b>   | <b>Indicted on February 27, 2025.</b>     |
| <b>Elvin Donahel Hernandez Amador<br/>(Honduras)</b>  | <b>Indicted on December 17, 2024.</b>     |
| <b>Elmer Modesto Amador<br/>(Honduras)</b>            | <b>Indicted on October 1, 2024.</b>       |
| <b>Junior Eduardo Ferrufino Andino<br/>(Honduras)</b> | <b>Indicted on October 1, 2024.</b>       |
| <b>Noe Ardon<br/>(Honduras)</b>                       | <b>Indicted on June 25, 2024.</b>         |
| <b>Sindi Yamileth Mejia Avila<br/>(Guatemala)</b>     | <b>Indicted on December 17, 2024.</b>     |
| <b>Cristian Daniel Diaz-Garcia<br/>(Honduras)</b>     | <b>Scheduled for trial in April 2025.</b> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Pedro Amaya Enriquez</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>    | <b>Indicted on June 25, 2024.</b>  |
| <b>Juan Resendiz Ledesma</b><br><b>(Mexico)</b>     | <b>Indicted on June 25, 2024.</b>  |
| <b>Erlin Maradiaga-Flores</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>  | <b>Pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft and sentenced on October 17, 2024, to 2 years in federal prison.</b>  |
| <b>Nidia Maradiaga-Flores</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>  | <b>Scheduled for trial in April 2025.</b>  |
| <b>Allan Gomez-Zelaya</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>      | <b>Pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft on January 30, 2024. Sentencing set for April 15, 2025.</b>           |
| <b>Elieser Gomez-Zelaya</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>    | <b>Superseding indictment returned on September 27, 2023.</b>  |
| <b>Juan Molina-Salles</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>      | <b>Indicted September 6, 2023.</b>   |
| <b>Gary Misael Pavon-Ardon</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b> | <b>Indicted on April 23, 2024.</b>   |
| <b>Antonino Resendiz-Badillo</b><br><b>(Mexico)</b> | <b>Pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft and sentenced on February 21, 2025, to 2 years in federal prison.</b> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Marcial Isael Torres-Salinas</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>   | <b>Indicted on July 30, 2024.</b>  |
| <b>Duglas Hernandez Valladares</b><br><b>(Honduras)</b>  | <b>Pleaded guilty to aggravated identity theft on January 25, 2024. Sentencing set for April 17, 2025.</b> |
| <b>Maximum Penalties</b>   |  |
| <b>Aggravated identity theft</b>   | <b>Mandatory 2 years in federal prison</b>   |
| <b>Misuse of Social Security number</b>  | <b>5 years in federal prison</b>   |
| <b>Making false statements for the purpose of unlawfully gaining employment in the United States</b> | <b>5 years in federal prison</b>   |

*Updated March 6, 2025*

**Topics**

**IDENTITY THEFT**

**IMMIGRATION**

**Component**

[USAO - Florida, Middle](#)