

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, November 16, 2020

Atlanta woman charged with unemployment insurance benefit fraud and identity theft

ATLANTA - Kadeidra Ra'Shawon White has been arraigned on federal charges of wire fraud, aggravated identity theft, and possession of fifteen or more unauthorized access devices.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment benefits have provided a lifeline to many Americans facing economic hardships and job losses,” said U.S. Attorney Byung J. “BJay” Pak. “This defendant lined her pockets with this money and drained critical resources when they were most needed to combat the financial impact of the pandemic.”

“An important mission of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of fraud related to unemployment insurance benefit programs. We will continue to work with our law enforcement and state workforce agency partners to pursue individuals who seek to undermine the integrity of the unemployment insurance program,” said Rafiq Ahmad, Special Agent-in-Charge, Atlanta Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

“In a time of vulnerability in our country, Postal Inspectors are ever vigilant in bringing to justice individuals who exploit the Covid-19 crisis for their own financial gain,” said Tommy D. Coke, Inspector in Charge of the Atlanta Division. “An important mission of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service is to protect the integrity of the U.S. Mail system and we will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate and hold criminals accountable for their illegal activities.”

“This investigation and subsequent indictment demonstrates the commitment the Secret Service and our law enforcement partners have in aggressively pursuing those who commit access device fraud and identity theft,” said Steven R. Baisel, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service, Atlanta Field Office. “These charges prove our continuing resolve to eliminate corruption, particularly when the funds should have been used to help our neediest families.”

According to U.S. Attorney Pak, the charges, and other information presented in court: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law. The CARES Act created a temporary federal program that provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits and also instituted a temporary additional unemployment benefit of \$600 per week.

From at least June 2020, through October 8, 2020, White is alleged to have filed fraudulent online applications for unemployment benefits with the States of Arizona, Ohio, and Nevada. The online applications were filed in victims' names without their permission and included the victims' dates of birth, Social Security numbers, and other personally identifiable information.

As a result of the online applications, unemployment benefits were issued in the victims' names and transferred onto debit cards. The debit cards were then mailed to addresses within the Atlanta area that were associated with or accessible to the defendant. It is further alleged that on or about October 8, 2020, the defendant possessed at least fifteen unauthorized access devices, including Social Security numbers and debit cards.

Kadeidra Ra'Shawon White, 27, of Clarkston, Georgia, was arraigned before U.S. Magistrate Judge Alan J. Baverman, charged with seven counts of wire fraud, seven counts of aggravated identity theft, and one count of possession of fifteen or more unauthorized access devices. White was indicted by a federal grand jury on October 28, 2020. 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 Labor, Office of Inspector General, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and U.S. Secret Service.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Kelly K. Connors is prosecuting the case.

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>.