

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, January 6, 2023

Philadelphia, Lehigh Valley Postal Workers Agree to Repay Fraudulently Obtained Unemployment Assistance Benefits

PHILADELPHIA, PA – United States Attorney Jacqueline C. Romero announced that Jaire Chance, 27, of Philadelphia, has agreed to a consent judgment of \$100,399, and Robert Day, 42, of Center Valley, Lehigh County, has agreed to a consent judgment of \$110,610 to resolve allegations that they violated the False Claims Act by improperly seeking Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits when they were employed by the United States Postal Service.

The United States alleges that Chance and Day made materially false and fraudulent statements to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry to obtain PUA benefits, meant for individuals not eligible for regular unemployment compensation or extended unemployment benefits. In fact, both were working full-time for the United States Postal Service for most or all of the time they were receiving PUA benefits. During that time, Day was also earning income as a driver using the Uber mobile application to arrange work. Further details regarding the United States' allegations regarding conduct by Chance and Day can be found in the complaints filed in federal court, *United States v. Jaire Chance*, U.S.D.C. E.D. Pa. No. 2:22-cv-4626, and *United States v. Robert Dean Day*, U.S.D.C. E.D. Pa. No. 5:22-cv-4736.

“There is no excuse for any individual who fraudulently obtains money set aside to help victims of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said U.S. Attorney Romero. “The fraud alleged in this case is particularly egregious as it was perpetrated by a federal employee. The United States Attorney’s Office is ready to investigate and bring to justice any individual who abuses emergency assistance in this way.”

“It is alleged in the settlement agreements filed in court that Jaire Chance and Robert Day submitted weekly certifications, which falsely represented they were unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry’s Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program. In actuality, they were employed full-time by the U.S. Postal Service for all or a majority of the period that they submitted the certifications. The submission of those certifications resulted in Chance and Day receiving PUA benefit payments that they were not eligible to receive. We will continue to work with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry and our law enforcement partners to safeguard unemployment compensation benefit programs,” said Syreeta Scott, Special Agent-in-Charge, Philadelphia Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

“The majority of postal employees are hard-working public servants dedicated to moving the mail to its proper destination. Unfortunately, Day and Chance betrayed this public trust when applying for unemployment benefits. The USPS-OIG, along with our law enforcement partners, will continue to aggressively investigate those who engage in fraudulent activities intended to defraud federal benefit programs and the United States Postal Service,” stated Jeffrey E. Krafels, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Mid Atlantic Area Field Office, United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General.

This investigation was conducted by United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District with investigators from the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General and United States Department of Labor Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorneys Paul W. Kaufman and Isaac J. Jean-Pierre handled the investigation and consent resolution.

The claims resolved by the settlement are allegations only; there has been no determination of liability.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Pennsylvania, Eastern

Contact:

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