

PRESS RELEASE

Sacramento Man Pleads Guilty to Wire Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft in Connection with Covid-Related Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

Monday, September 15, 2025

For Immediate Release

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

Roosevelt Gulley III, 41, of Sacramento, pleaded guilty today to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft, U.S. Attorney Eric Grant announced.

According to court documents, from July through September 2020, Gulley participated in a Covid-fraud scheme targeting the Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefit program administered by the California Employment Development Department (EDD). He collected personally identifiable information, including names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers and other information, and electronically submitted fraudulent applications for UI benefits to the California EDD in those persons' identities. He electronically submitted at least 79 of these fraudulent applications to California EDD, which resulted in UI benefits debit cards being mailed to addresses he listed in the fraudulent applications. Gulley then retrieved the debit cards and removed money from them at various ATMs. The government alleges that the actual loss attributed to this fraudulent scheme was more than \$575,000, with an intended loss exceeding \$1.5 million.

"Roosevelt Gulley collected the personally identifiable information of individuals without their knowledge to fraudulently collect unemployment insurance benefits intended for American workers who lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Quentin Heiden, Special-Agent-in-Charge, Western Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. "I would like to thank the Eastern District of California and the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Strike Force for their continued efforts to hold accountable those who committed pandemic-related fraud."

This case is the product of an investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Inspector General and the California EDD’s Investigation Division, with assistance from the U.S. Secret Service. Assistant U.S. Attorney Denise N. Yasinow is prosecuting the case.

Gulley is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 26, 2026, by U.S. District Judge Dale A. Drozd. Gulley faces a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison for wire fraud and a mandatory additional sentence of two years in prison for aggravated identity theft. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.

This effort is part of a California COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Strike Force operation, one of five interagency COVID-19 fraud strike force teams established by the U.S. Department of Justice. The California Strike Force combines law enforcement and prosecutorial resources in the Eastern and Central Districts of California and focuses on large-scale, multistate pandemic relief fraud perpetrated by criminal organizations and transnational actors. The strike forces use prosecutor-led and data analyst-driven teams to identify and bring to justice those who stole pandemic relief funds.

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