

PRESS RELEASE

Winter Garden Man Sentenced To Federal Prison For Aggravated Identity Theft

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

For Immediate Release

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

Orlando, Florida – U.S. District Judge Gregory A. Presnell has sentenced Michael Barrington Douglas (52, Winter Garden) to two years and one day in federal prison, followed by one year of supervised release, for aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number. As part of his sentence, Douglas also must pay restitution to the Florida Department of Commerce and U.S. Department of Agriculture. Douglas entered a guilty plea on January 17, 2024.

According to court documents, Douglas was born in Jamaica and entered the United States on an immigrant visa in 1991. In 1999, an immigration judge ordered Douglas removed from the United States after he was convicted of felony firearm and drug offenses. Douglas, however, never departed the United States. Instead, he assumed the identity of J.M., a U.S. citizen, and remained in the United States.

On April 8, 2021, Douglas obtained a Florida driver license in J.M.'s name and date of birth. To obtain the driver license, Douglas falsely claimed he was a U.S. citizen and presented J.M.'s birth certificate and Social Security card.

Because Douglas was not authorized to work in the United States following his removal order, he used J.M.'s identity to apply for and obtain employment. Douglas worked at a hotel in Lake Buena Vista from 2012 to 2023. He was furloughed for a period during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which he applied for and received unemployment insurance and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) benefits using J.M.'s identity.

Douglas also used J.M.'s identity to apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, which he received and spent at various locations in the Middle District of Florida.

This case was investigated by Homeland Security Investigations, the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of Inspector General, the U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General, and the Social Security Administration - Office of the Inspector General. It was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Matthew Del Mastro and Assistant United States Attorney Richard Varadan.

Updated May 22, 2024

Topic

IDENTITY THEFT

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