

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Boston Woman Sentenced for Fraudulently Obtaining COVID-Relief Funds**

Thursday, February 13, 2025

**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – A Boston woman was sentenced in federal court in Boston for a scheme to fraudulently obtain pandemic-related relief funds from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

Jameela Gross, 28, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge William G. Young to time served (one day) to be followed by three years of supervised release. Gross has also been ordered to pay \$18,750 in restitution. In September 2024, Gross pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud. Gross was arrested [in February 2024](#) along with over 40 Heath Street Gang members/associates, who were charged with racketeering conspiracy, drug trafficking, firearms charges and financial frauds, including COVID-related fraud.

Among other relief programs, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act created the PPP, a temporary loan program directed at small businesses. PPP loans were processed and funded by participating lenders and guaranteed by the U.S. Small Business Administration. If the small business used the loan funds for permissible expenses, the loan could be forgiven.

In April 2021, Gross submitted a fraudulent PPP loan application on behalf of her purported photography business. The application contained multiple false statements, including false representations regarding the fictitious business's income in 2020 and the purpose of the loan. Gross also submitted false tax records in support of her loan application. Based on the fraudulent application, Gross received approximately \$18,750.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox; Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and Thomas Demeo, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue

Service Criminal Investigations made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Sarah Hoefle and Lucy Sun of the Criminal Division prosecuted the case.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

*Updated February 13, 2025*

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**Topic**

**CORONAVIRUS**

**Component**

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