

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Nevada

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 6, 2021

Las Vegas Man Pleads Guilty To Filing Fraudulent Claims For Over \$250,000 In Unemployment Insurance Benefits Through Mail Fraud Scheme

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – A Las Vegas man pleaded guilty today to filing two dozen fraudulent unemployment insurance claims, which were approved for more than \$250,000 in unemployment benefits from the Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR) and California Employment Development Department (EDD).

According to court documents and admissions made in court, from June 1, 2020 to September 28, 2020, Antwine Demon Hunter, 24, and co-conspirators used personally identifiable information belonging to victims to submit 24 false unemployment claims to DETR and EDD. As part of the scheme, Hunter had DETR and EDD mail debit cards containing unemployment benefits to addresses he had access to. In total, more than \$250,000 in unemployment benefits were approved, and at least \$189,118 were withdrawn by Hunter.

Hunter pleaded guilty to one count of mail fraud. U.S. District Judge Andrew P. Gordon scheduled sentencing for October 27, 2021. Hunter faces a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Acting U.S. Attorney Christopher Chiou for the District of Nevada and Special Agent in Charge Quentin Heiden of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG), Los Angeles Region made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the DOL-OIG. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Fang is prosecuting the case.

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>.

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