PRESS RELEASE

Former Department of Labor Employee Sentenced for Fraudulently Obtaining Over $40,000 in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Benefits

Tuesday, August 11, 2026

For Immediate Release
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

BOSTON – A former employee of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) was sentenced today in federal court in Boston for fraudulently obtaining over $40,000 in pandemic unemployment assistance (PUA) benefits.

Mo Yuong Kang, 51, formerly of Woburn and Dracut, Mass., was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Brian E. Murphy to one year of probation. The defendant was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of $45,868 and forfeiture in the amount of $45,868. In May 2026, Kang pleaded guilty to four counts of wire fraud after being indicted by a federal grand jury in August 2025.

Kang worked as an Industrial Hygienist with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, an agency of the DOL, from June 2016 until July 2023. In 2020 and 2021, Kang was a full-time employee of the DOL and earned over $85,000 annually.

In April 2020, Kang submitted a false PUA application to the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA). In the application, Kang claimed under the penalty of perjury that he was “self-employed, an independent contractor, or a gig worker and COVID-19 had severely limited [his] ability to perform [his] normal work,” and that he had not earned more than $89 a week since March 8, 2020. The DUA approved Kang’s claim, and through September 2021 Kang subsequently submitted weekly certifications to the DUA claiming that he did not work and did not receive any income during those weekly periods. Based upon his application and weekly certifications, Kang received $45,868 in PUA benefits to which he was not entitled.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and Christopher Silvestro, Special Agent in Charge of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Northeast Field Office made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristina E. Barclay of the Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit prosecuted the case.

On March 26, 2026, United States Attorney Leah B. Foley announced the creation of the Benefit & Voter Fraud Team, a district-wide initiative established in response to the rampant fraud being uncovered across Massachusetts. The Team is led by two senior federal prosecutors serving as Fraud Coordinators, whose mission it is to aggressively investigate and prosecute misuse of taxpayer-funded benefits in Massachusetts.

Members of the public are encouraged to report suspected benefit fraud in Massachusetts by calling 1-855-SCAM-MA-1 (855-722-6621).

On April 7, 2026, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. The Fraud Division is investigating and prosecuting those who commit fraud against the American people. The Department's work to combat fraud supports President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was enacted in March 2020 and designed to provide emergency financial assistance to the millions of Americans who were suffering the economic effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CARES Act created a new temporary federal unemployment insurance program called pandemic unemployment assistance (PUA), which provided unemployment benefits for individuals who were not eligible for standard unemployment benefits. To receive PUA benefits, Massachusetts claimants were required to certify in an initial registration and in weekly certifications whether or not they worked or received any income during the relevant time period. The PUA program was administered in Massachusetts by the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

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