

PRESS RELEASE

Former Employee of Maryland State Contractor Pleads Guilty to Unemployment Benefits Fraud Charges

Monday, August 10, 2026

For Immediate Release

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

Baltimore, Maryland – A former Maryland Department of Labor (MD-DOL) insider pled guilty in federal court to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft charges.

Katrina McCant, 41, of Baltimore, pled guilty to charges in connection with a scheme to fraudulently obtain unemployment insurance (UI) claim benefits during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This prosecution is part of the Trump Administration's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud.

Kelly O. Hayes, U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced the guilty plea with Inspector General Anthony P. D'Esposito, U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General, (DOL-OIG), and Special Agent in Charge Jimmy Paul, FBI Baltimore Field Office.

According to her guilty plea, beginning in January 2021, and continuing until December 2021, McCant used her position as a contractor for Company #1 to advance the scheme. Company #1 provided support services to MD-DOL. While working for the MD-DOL, McCant enriched herself by fraudulently obtaining UI benefits.

McCant used her insider access to MD-DOL data and databases to upload and approve documents submitted in support of UI claims. Some of the claims she initiated herself while others she took over by changing the claimant's email address and name to her own.

In furthering the scheme, she removed holds on UI claims, certified weeks, and engaged in other actions to facilitate fraudulent UI benefit payments. As part of the scheme, McCant changed the names of the claimants to facilitate the direct deposit of funds into her financial accounts. She also used the personal identifiable information (PII) of

multiple real people, who were aggravated identity theft victims, to make changes to UI claims in the MD-DOL system.

Additionally, McCant used her insider access to MD-DOL data and databases to upload and approve certain documents submitted in support of UI claims. McCant also used her access to remove fraud holds on UI claims, certify weeks, and engage in other actions to facilitate the payment of fraudulent UI benefits for other individuals. These individuals paid McCant a one-time fee, often through PayPal, to fraudulently approve or facilitate fraudulent claims. McCant's fee varied depending on the size of the claim, as she received amounts that ranged from approximately \$500 to \$8,000 per claim.

As part of the plea, McCant agreed to pay restitution to the Maryland Department of Labor of at least \$550,000. McCant also agreed to a forfeiture of at least \$550,000.

On April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division ("Fraud 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.

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>.

U.S. Attorney Hayes commended the DOL-OIG and FBI for their work in the investigation. Ms. Hayes also thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jared W. Murphy and Harry Gruber who are prosecuting this federal case.

For more information about the Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office, its priorities, and resources available to report fraud, please visit justice.gov/usao-md and justice.gov/usao-md/report-fraud.

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