

# Georgia Inmate Sentenced for Orchestrating Pandemic Unemployment Fraud Scheme From Jail

Friday, February 10, 2023

## For Immediate Release

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

MACON, Ga. – A Georgia inmate who admitted he conducted a pandemic unemployment insurance fraud scheme from behind bars, which included using the personal identifiable information (PII) of other inmates, was sentenced to prison this week for his crime.

Jacob Garner, 34, of Milledgeville, Georgia, was sentenced to serve 24 months in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release by Chief U.S. District Judge Marc T. Treadwell on Feb. 9 after he previously pleaded guilty to theft of United States government funds. Garner's federal sentence will be served consecutively to the parole revocation sentence he is currently serving in Baldwin County, Georgia. There is no parole in the federal system.

According to court records, Garner was an inmate at the Baldwin County Jail in 2020 when a Baldwin County detective located messages between Garner and his then girlfriend and co-defendant, Lindsey Garner (née Quinton), 32, of Milledgeville, discussing filing fraudulent unemployment insurance/pandemic unemployment assistance (UI/PUA) claims to the Georgia Department of Labor (GA-DOL).

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG) agents investigated and discovered that Garner instructed Quinton to obtain fraudulent UI/PUA loans for both themselves and two inmates. Ultimately, of the four claims, only two claims were issued: \$10,329 in Quinton's name and \$13,776 in Garner's name, totaling \$24,105. Quinton was employed at the time and was not eligible for the pandemic loans; incarcerated individuals are also not eligible for UI/PUA benefits. All four of the claims listed Quinton's former mailing address and were submitted from the same IP address.

In addition, the email addresses used to obtain fraudulent UI/PUA loans were linked back to Quinton's personal email account. A search of Garner's jail cell found a list of inmates with their PII, including social security numbers and dates of birth. Both Garner and Quinton admitted to their roles in the scheme; Quinton pleaded guilty to theft of government funds on Aug. 24, 2022, and was sentenced to serve five years of probation on Nov. 2, 2022.

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 via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor-Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG), the United States Secret Service (USSS) and the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Alex Kalim prosecuted the case.  
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## Topics

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