

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of New Jersey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 3, 2022

New Jersey Man Sentenced to 80 Months in Prison for Stealing more than \$450,000 in Unemployment Insurance Benefits

NEWARK, N.J. – A Union, New Jersey, man was sentenced today to 80 months in prison for illegally obtaining more than \$450,000 in unemployment insurance benefits, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger announced.

Maurice Mills, 30, of Union, New Jersey, previously pleaded guilty by videoconference before U.S. District Judge Brian Martinotti to an information charging him with wire fraud. Judge Martinotti imposed the sentence by videoconference today.

According to documents filed in the case and statements made in court:

On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) was signed into law. The CARES Act created a new temporary federal unemployment insurance program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), which provides unemployment insurance benefits (UIB) for individuals who were not eligible for other types of unemployment (e.g., the self-employed, independent contractors, gig economy workers). The CARES Act also created a new temporary federal program called Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation that provides additional benefits to those eligible for PUA and regular UIB. The New York State Department of Labor administers and manages the regular unemployment and PUA programs in the State of New York.

Between August and September of 2020, Mills submitted fraudulent UIB applications to the State of New York using the names of other individuals. As a result, the State of New York approved and provided, and Mills falsely obtained, more than \$450,000 in UIB.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Martinotti sentenced Mills to three years of supervised release and ordered him to pay \$486,760 in restitution.

U.S. Attorney Sellinger credited special agents of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jonathan Mellone in Manhattan; special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge George M. Crouch Jr., in Newark; postal inspectors of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Acting Inspector in Charge Raimundo Marrero in Newark; and special agents of the U.S. Secret Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Mark McKeivitt in Newark,

with the investigation leading to today's arrest. He also thanked the New York State Department of Labor, Office of Special Investigations for its assistance in the investigation.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Andrew Kogan of the U.S. Attorney's Office Cybercrime Unit in Newark.

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