

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Massachusetts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

New York Man Sentenced for Role in Fraud and Money Laundering Schemes

BOSTON – A Nigerian national was sentenced yesterday in connection with his involvement in multiple criminal schemes, including the submission of fraudulent pandemic-related assistance claims using stolen personally identifiable information and money laundering.

Damilola Adepoju, 29, of Queens, N.Y., was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Patti B. Saris to four years in prison and ordered to pay \$299,500 in restitution. Adepoju will be subject to deportation upon completion of his sentence. On July 21, 2021, Adepoju pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud, money laundering and aggravated identity theft.

In March 2020, in response to the global coronavirus pandemic, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which among other things, created a temporary federal unemployment insurance program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). The PUA program provided unemployment insurance benefits for individuals who were not eligible for other types of unemployment benefits.

Between May 2020 and May 2021, Adepoju participated in a scheme to submit fraudulent PUA claims in multiple states, including Massachusetts, using the stolen personal information of others. Adepoju used fake identification cards and created financial accounts in the names of the victims in order to receive PUA funds. Adepoju also used a shoe retail business he operated to launder funds, funneling the money to other financial accounts inside and outside the United States. The investigation has identified more than \$600,000 in actual or attempted losses associated with the scheme.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; and Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent in Charge of Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations made the announcement. The Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance provided valuable assistance with the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Markham of Rollins' Securities, Financial & Cyber Fraud Unit prosecuted 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>.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - Massachusetts](#)

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