

PRESS RELEASE

Rockford Woman Pleads Guilty to Defrauding the Government of More Than \$2 Million in Federal Unemployment Benefits

Thursday, October 8, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Illinois

ROCKFORD — A Rockford woman has pleaded guilty to federal fraud charges for operating a scheme to illegally obtain more than \$2 million in federally funded unemployment benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program.

CARISSA JORDAN, 46, admitted in a plea agreement that she used the personal identifying information of various individuals to submit false Pandemic Unemployment Assistance applications. Jordan had obtained the personal identifying information through social media, with and without the individuals' knowledge and consent. After receiving debit cards containing the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance funds, Jordan used the money for her own personal benefit.

Jordan pleaded guilty in federal court in Rockford on Wednesday to wire fraud charges. She faces a maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000. U.S. District Judge Iain D. Johnston set sentencing for March 31, 2027.

The guilty plea was announced by Andrew S. Boutros, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert S. Ladd.

On April 7, 2026, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. The Fraud Division is laser-focused on 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.

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