

PRESS RELEASE

Two Defendants Sentenced to 15 Years and Seven Years in Prison for Their Roles in a Multimillion-Dollar Bank Fraud and Identity Theft Scheme

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Alabama

MOBILE, AL – Two defendants were sentenced to 180 months and 84 months in prison, respectively, for their roles in a sophisticated, multimillion-dollar bank fraud and identity theft scheme.

According to court documents, Demetrius J. Manassa, 38, of New York, New York, and Jarrod A. Ross, 30, of Mobile, pleaded guilty to participating in a complex, nationwide bank fraud and identity theft scheme. The scheme, which lasted for nearly a decade from September 2015 to April 2025, involved widespread theft of mail, counterfeiting of checks and money orders, and impersonation of dozens of identity theft victims. To accomplish the scheme, Manassa, Ross, and other coconspirators—including Shaquan L. Manassa (“S. Manassa”), Patrick E. Williams (“Williams”), and Khashawn D. Sidberry (“Sidberry”)—obtained and possessed stolen checks and money orders, opened bank accounts using identity theft victims’ personal identifiable information (“PII”), produced dozens of forged identification documents, counterfeited hundreds of checks and money orders, and conducted millions of dollars’ worth of fraudulent transactions at banks throughout the United States, including in the Southern District of Alabama.

In 2022, thousands of blank Postal Money Orders (“PMOs”) were stolen from three separate postal facilities in New York and North Carolina. Thereafter, Manassa and other coconspirators counterfeited dozens of the stolen PMOs and began fraudulently negotiating them in various accounts at banks across the southeastern United States. Postal Inspectors identified Williams on surveillance videos depositing many of the fraudulent PMOs at banks in the Mobile area. To successfully carry out the fraudulent transactions, Manassa, Ross, and other coconspirators fraudulently opened bank

accounts using stolen PII of identity theft victims and generated fake identification documents bearing the victims' stolen PII.

For example, on August 5, 2022, Ross visited a bank in Mobile and fraudulently opened a checking account using a fake Mississippi driver's license bearing Ross's picture but the stolen PII of an identity theft victim from New York. The victim confirmed that he had never been to Alabama and did not authorize Ross to possess and use his stolen PII to open an account and conduct transactions in the victim's name. After Ross opened the account, Williams was captured on video depositing several counterfeited PMOs into the account. The conspirators did the same thing in dozens of other accounts that they fraudulently opened in the names of identity theft victims from across the country.

The fraudsters also incorporated multiple fake businesses and opened bank accounts in the names of those purported businesses so that they could attempt to negotiate higher-value checks, some of which were worth more than \$1 million each. The victim owners of those stolen checks included, among others, religious organizations, small businesses, charities, and public school systems.

In April 2025, federal and local law enforcement agents executed a search warrant at Manassa's home in the Atlanta, Georgia area. Inside the house, agents found dozens of stolen and counterfeited checks and money orders, fake identification documents, assorted stolen mail, counterfeiting stations with printers and dozens of sheets of blank check stock, a loaded Glock pistol, and loose ammunition. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service's forensic laboratory in Dulles, Virginia, identified several fingerprints of the defendants on various items of fraudulent paperwork seized from Manassa's house. Agents also searched Manassa's cell phones, which contained hundreds of messages that he exchanged with Ross and other coconspirators in furtherance of the fraud scheme.

Agents obtained search warrants for social media and email accounts belonging to Manassa, Ross, and others involved in the scheme. In those accounts, agents located photos and videos of Manassa and Ross committing fraudulent transactions and possessing tens of thousands of dollars' worth of cash proceeds of their frauds. Manassa's Gmail search history included searches for "fake moneygram money orders," "how to erase pen off paper money order," and "largest bank frauds in history." Similarly, Ross's iCloud account contained "fraud Bibles" and how-to guides for committing various fraud schemes.

In addition to the check and money order fraud scheme described above, Ross and Sidberry submitted more than \$400,000 in fraudulent unemployment insurance applications to state departments of labor claiming bogus federal pandemic relief

benefits. In their fraudulent applications, Ross and Sidberry made numerous misrepresentations about their entitlement unemployment benefits intended for workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"For nearly a decade, Demetrius Manassa, Jarrod Ross, and their band of fraudsters exploited and stole from hundreds of individuals, businesses, charities, schools, and other victims across the country, causing untold damage. The extraordinary investigative work of our federal and local partners put an end to it," said Sean P. Costello, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. "The sentences in this case send a clear message: crime does not pay in the Southern District of Alabama."

"Postal Inspectors, along with other law enforcement agents, unraveled a sophisticated counterfeit check and USPS Money Order scheme that resulted in the identity theft of hundreds of victims and millions of dollars in losses," said Shameka Jackson, Inspector in Charge of the Houston Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. "Postal Inspectors will continue to work tirelessly to go after those who try to exploit the U.S. mail system for fraudulent financial gain and bring them to justice. We would like to thank the DOL-OIG for their assistance in this investigation."

"Demetrius Manassa and Jarrod Ross stole money meant to help Americans find work. These sentences send a strong message to fraudsters; if you steal from the federal government and taxpayers, my office will relentlessly pursue you," said Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor. "We will work together with other law enforcement partners and have zero tolerance for fraud. We will find you and hold you accountable."

U.S. District Judge Kristi K. DuBose sentenced Manassa and Ross to serve 180 months and 84 months in prison, respectively. At sentencing, the court noted Manassa's extensive criminal history, including a prior federal conviction for a conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine in the District of Vermont and several state convictions for theft, fraud, and drug offenses. In addition to the prison terms, the court ordered Manassa and Ross to pay \$687,259.04 in victim restitution. Upon their release from prison, Manassa and Ross each will serve five-year terms of supervised release, during which time they will be subject to credit restrictions.

S. Manassa, Williams, and Sidberry pleaded guilty to participating in the fraud scheme. The court will sentence them later in 2026.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General investigated the case. The U.S. Secret Service, the Baldwin County Sheriff's

Office, the Florida Highway Patrol, the Glen Rock Police Department (New Jersey), and the South Fulton Police Department (Georgia) substantially assisted the investigation.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Justin Roller prosecuted the case on behalf of the United States.

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