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Walgreens Agrees to Pay Up to \$350 Million for Illegally Filling Unlawful Opioid Prescriptions and Submitting False Claims to the Federal Government

On April 21, 2025, Walgreens Boots Alliance and various subsidiaries (“Walgreens”), agreed to a \$300 million settlement to resolve allegations that the national pharmacy chain filled millions of invalid prescriptions for opioids and other controlled substances in violation of the Controlled Substances Act and then sought payment from Medicare and other federal health care programs, including workers compensation programs administered by the DOL, for many of those prescriptions. As part of the settlement, Walgreens will owe the United States an additional \$50 million if the company is sold, merged, or transferred prior to 2032.

On April 18, 2025, the U.S. Department of Justice filed an amended civil complaint alleging that Walgreens knowingly filled millions of prescriptions for controlled substances that lacked a legitimate medical purpose, were invalid, and were not issued in the usual course of professional practice. The complaint further alleged that Walgreens pharmacists filled the prescriptions despite clear “red flags” indicating the prescriptions were highly likely to be invalid.

This is a joint investigation with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS)-OIG, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the Defense Health Agency, the Office of Personnel Management, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs-OIG, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). *United States v. Walgreen Co. et al.* (N.D. Illinois)

Mexican Nationals Admit Roles in Smuggling and Labor Trafficking Scheme

On April 11, 2025, and May 19, 2025, Maria Del Carmen Sanchez Potrero and Apolinar Francisco Paredes Espinoza were sentenced, respectively, for their involvement in a scheme to smuggle undocumented workers into the United States, harbor them at Connecticut residences, force them to work, and threaten to harm them if they failed to pay exorbitant fees, interest, and living expenses.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is pleased to present the *OIG Investigations Newsletter*, containing a quarterly summary of selected investigative accomplishments.

The OIG conducts criminal, civil, and administrative investigations into alleged violations of federal laws relating to DOL programs, operations, and personnel. In addition, the OIG conducts criminal investigations to combat the influence of labor racketeering and organized crime in the nation’s labor unions in three areas: employee benefit plans, labor-management relations, and internal union affairs.

Sanchez, Paredes, and a third co-defendant, Porfiria Maribel Ramos Sanchez, forced the undocumented individuals to work in circumvention of DOL's H-2B visa program. Sanchez and Paredes were sentenced to 51 months and 40 months in prison, respectively. Sanchez and Paredes were also ordered to pay restitution of more than \$574,000, jointly and severally, with Ramos.

The defendants arranged to enter the United States with undocumented workers for fees of between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per worker. In most cases, the workers were required to provide a property deed as collateral before leaving Mexico. After the undocumented workers arrived in Connecticut, they were told they owed \$30,000 plus interest. They were also forced to pay Ramos, Sanchez, and Paredes for their rent, food, gas, and utilities. The defendants created false identity documents for the workers and helped them to find employment. In addition to their jobs, some workers were required to perform housework and yardwork without compensation or a debt reduction. To date, the investigation has identified 18 trafficked undocumented workers.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Hartford Police Department. *United States v. Maria Del Carmen Sanchez-Potrero*; *United States v. Apolinar Francisco Paredes-Espinoza*; *United States v. Porfiria Maribel Ramos Sanchez* (D. Connecticut)

Former Maryland AFGE Local Secretary-Treasurer Convicted in Scheme to Defraud Labor Union

On April 21, 2025, Kelleigh Williams pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud for her role in a scheme to defraud the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 2419.

From December 2013 to August 2022, Williams was employed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland, where she also served as the Secretary-Treasurer of AFGE Local 2419, a labor union that represents federal bargaining unit employees at NIH facilities in Maryland and North Carolina. While serving as the AFGE Local 2419 Secretary-Treasurer, her co-conspirator in the union devised Local 2419's "lost time policy" that allows union officials or members to be compensated for time taken off from their regular jobs to perform union duties. However, Williams and her co-conspirator failed to present this policy to the Executive Board or membership as required by the union's constitution and by-laws. Williams received more than \$37,000 in lost time payments, which were approved by her co-conspirator, for periods of time that she was already receiving official wages and official time compensation from NIH or for times she was not conducting union business.

Following the termination of the co-conspirator's employment with the NIH and AFGE Local 2419, Williams and her co-conspirator devised a plan to allow the latter to continue running AFGE Local 2419 as a consultant rather than as an elected union official. The co-conspirators established a contract between the union and a company founded by the co-conspirator. From August 2019 to June 2022, the co-conspirator received more than \$877,000 in union funds.

This is a joint investigation with the DOL-Office of Labor-Management Standards. *United States v. Kelleigh Williams* (D. Maryland)

Florida Couple Pleads Guilty to Their Roles in Scheme to Provide and Receive Prohibited Labor Payments

On April 2, 2025, Ricky O’Quinn and his wife, Mabel O’Quinn, each pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to provide and receive prohibited labor payments in violation of the Taft-Hartley Act.

From approximately 2010 to 2023, Ricky O’Quinn served as both an officer and employee of the International Union, Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America (SPFPA), a labor union representing protective security officers at federal worksites. SPFPA executed collective bargaining agreements with multiple employers covering the security industry in several states. Mabel O’Quinn was the founder, incorporator, and an initial director of a company that provided protective security officers at federal workplaces in numerous states. While Mabel O’Quinn served as the chief executive officer and president of the company, Ricky O’Quinn was involved in the finance, budget, and operations of the company since its inception in a clandestine role. Both defendants hid Ricky O’Quinn’s involvement in operating their company.

From at least 2010 to 2023, Individual-1 was the president of Company-1, which also provides protective security officers at federal workplaces in numerous states. The defendants conspired with Individual-1 to obtain government contracts by exploiting the status of their company as a small, woman service-disabled owned business.

Company-1 used the O’Quinn’s company as a subcontractor and advised them on what contracts to bid and in which geographic locations, which produced financial benefits for both companies. In exchange, Individual-1 and his family would receive 40 percent of the ownership and/or profits of the O’Quinn’s company.

From at least April 2013 through June 2024, Individual-1 agreed to award subcontracts from Company-1 to supply private security guards at various federal installations to the O’Quinn’s company. The proceeds from those awards totaled tens of millions of dollars.

United States v. Ricky O’Quinn; United States v. Mabel O’Quinn (E.D. Virginia)

Three Georgia Residents Sentenced to Federal Prison in a \$30 Million COVID-19 Pandemic-Related Fictitious Employer Unemployment Insurance Scheme

On May 22, 2025, Macovian Doston, Shatara Hubbard, and Torella Wynn were sentenced to 180 months, 72 months, and 12 months in prison, respectively, for their roles in a large-scale pandemic-related unemployment insurance (UI) fraud scheme.

From March 2020 to November 2022, the defendants and their co-conspirators created fictitious employers and fabricated lists of purported employees using the personal identifiable information (PII) of thousands of identity theft victims. They then filed fraudulent UI claims with the Georgia Department of Labor. The defendants obtained the PII from several sources, including by paying a Georgia-based health care employee to steal PII from hospital databases and by purchasing PII from online sources. As

a result, pre-paid debit cards, which were loaded with stolen UI funds, were mailed to various locations controlled by the conspirators.

In total, the defendants submitted more than 5,000 fraudulent UI claims that resulted in a loss of at least \$30 million to the UI program.

This is a joint investigation with the United States Secret Service (USSS), the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-OIG, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI), the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS)-OIG. *United States v. Macovian Doston*; *United States v. Shatara Hubbard*; *United States v. Torella Wynn* (M.D. Georgia)

Bank Contractor Pled Guilty to Unemployment Insurance Fraud Conspiracy

On April 3, 2025, Jaysha Victorian pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud for her role in a UI fraud scheme targeted at the California Employment Development Department (CA EDD).

From late 2020 to early 2021, Victorian, who was employed as a contractor for a national financial institution, handled a variety of administrative banking tasks, including those involving pre-paid debit cards for California's UI system. She used her access to the bank's internal systems to misuse the UI program. The pre-paid cards were distributed to other co-conspirators, who later withdrew the stolen funds at ATMs and other locations.

In total, Victorian credited at least 187 cards with nearly \$8.6 million in fraudulent proceeds. Of that amount, more than \$7.6 million was either withdrawn or spent before the cards could be frozen by the financial institution. She admitted to using some of the fraudulently obtained funds and receiving approximately \$300,000 for her role in the scheme.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI and the DHS-OIG. *United States v. Jaysha Victorian* (S.D. Texas)

Michigan Man Pled Guilty for Role in Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On April 23, 2025, Terrance Calhoun, Jr. pled guilty to aggravated identity theft, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and possession of 15 or more unauthorized access devices for his role in a \$4 million identity theft and UI fraud scheme.

According to his plea agreement, Calhoun Jr. and his co-conspirators used stolen PII to file hundreds of fraudulent UI claims with the Michigan, Arizona, and Maryland state workforce agencies (SWA) in the names of identity theft victims without their knowledge or consent. As a result of the scheme, hundreds of debit cards, which were loaded with more than \$4 million in UI benefits, were mailed to addresses controlled by the conspirators. To access the stolen funds, the defendants made \$1.6 million in purchases and cash withdrawals by using the UI debit cards.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI, the IRS-CI, ICE, the USSS, the USPS-OIG, and the Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency (MUIA). *United States v. Terrance Calhoun Jr. et al.* (E.D. Michigan)

Florida Woman Sentenced to More Than 6 Years in Prison for Organizing \$3.2 Million Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On April 24, 2025, Tiia Woods was sentenced to 74 months in prison and ordered to pay more than \$3.2 million in restitution for her role in leading a pandemic-related, UI fraud scheme executed to defraud the Maryland Department of Labor (MD DOL).

From approximately June 2020 to May 2021, Woods and her co-conspirators submitted fraudulent UI applications to MD DOL that contained addresses, employment status, work histories, occupations, and benefit eligibility of unsuspecting identity theft victims. Using electronic communications, Woods fraudulently applied for UI benefits, modified UI claims within the MD DOL online system, and checked the status of the claims. Once MD DOL disbursed the UI benefits via pre-paid debit cards, she used various financial transactions, including ATM withdrawals and point-of-sale transactions, to obtain the stolen funds. Woods also provided instructions to her co-conspirators via text message in furtherance of the conspiracy, which included information on how to obtain UI benefits, expedite a UI claim, and how much of the fraudulent proceeds that she would keep for herself.

Woods and her co-conspirators submitted at least 150 fraudulent UI claim applications, resulting in a loss of more than \$3.2 million.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI as part of the Maryland COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Strike Force. *United States v. Tiia Woods et al.* (D. Maryland)

New York Man Sentenced to More Than 2 Years in Prison for Money Laundering Connected to Stolen Federal Funds

On April 1, 2025, Xing Zheng was sentenced to 28 months in prison for his role in a conspiracy to launder approximately \$2.9 million in fraud proceeds, including more than \$426,000 in stolen Social Security retirement funds and COVID-19 pandemic-related UI benefits from six SWAs. Zheng was also ordered to pay approximately \$426,000 in restitution to the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) and the various SWAs, as well as to forfeit \$745,000.

In May 2020, Zheng and a co-conspirator agreed to launder fraud proceeds from various fraud schemes. In furtherance of the conspiracy, a co-conspirator filed fraudulent applications for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits and with the SSA Retirement Insurance Benefit program by using the stolen identities and personal PII of eligible retirees and other individuals. The fraudulently obtained funds were then transferred to bank accounts controlled by the conspirators. Zheng purchased approximately 1,565 debit and gift cards valued at approximately \$2.9 million with the proceeds, which he then laundered and exchanged for cryptocurrency. In total, he retained approximately 25 percent of the value of the debit and gift cards.

This is a joint investigation with the SSA-OIG and the FBI. *United States v. Xing Zheng* (E.D. Pennsylvania)

Brooklyn Man Sentenced to 60 Months in Prison for \$1.75 Million COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On May 21, 2025, Bryan Abraham was sentenced to 60 months in prison for aggravated identity theft and conspiracy to commit access device fraud. He was also ordered to forfeit almost \$580,000 and to pay restitution in the same amount.

From June 2020 to April 2021, Abraham and his co-conspirators defrauded the New York State Department of Labor of more than \$1.75 million in UI benefits. He and his co-conspirators used encrypted applications to purchase stolen PII. They then fraudulently applied for UI benefits in the names of approximately 250 identity theft victims without their knowledge or consent. Abraham was personally responsible for the submission of at least 78 fraudulent UI claims. He and his co-conspirators flaunted their ill-gotten gains on social media with images of stacks of cash, designer clothing, jewelry, and luxury cars. They also discussed the logistics of the scheme using encrypted applications, including where to purchase stolen PII and how to withdraw stolen funds.

This is a joint investigation with the USPIIS and the New York Police Department. *United States v. Bryan Abraham et al.* (E.D. New York)

Florida Man Sentenced to 54 Months in Prison for Role in Multi-State Unemployment Insurance Fraud Conspiracy

On May 22, 2025, Ben Espinal was sentenced to 54 months in prison and ordered to pay restitution of more than \$1.2 million for his role in a scheme to defraud the CA EDD of COVID-19 pandemic-related UI benefits.

From August 2020 to August 2022, Espinal and his co-conspirators submitted fraudulent UI claims to CA EDD by using compromised PII. The defendants then facilitated the submission of UI claims to CA EDD via an identity verification company by creating counterfeit driver licenses with victims' PII and photographs of conspirators. To access the stolen funds, the conspirators used rental vehicles to go to various ATMs to make cash withdrawals. The scheme resulted in the theft of more than \$1.2 million in UI benefits from the CA EDD.

This is a joint investigation with the HSI as part of the Southern District of Florida Miami COVID-19 Strike Force. *United States v. Ben Felix Espinal* (S.D. Florida)

Four California Siblings Sentenced for Roles in \$1.1 Million Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On April 24, 2025, Evelyn Taylor, Laron Taylor, Latrice Taylor, and Raschell Taylor were sentenced to 18 months, 54 months, 27 months, and 24 months in prison, respectively, for participating in a scheme in which they created nonexistent businesses and subsequently claimed more than \$1.1 million in UI

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OIG hotline via 800-347-3756 or www.oig.dol.gov.

benefits for purported employees of the fake businesses. The defendants were also ordered to pay more than \$567,000 in restitution.

From February 2013 to July 2016, the defendants, along with their co-conspirators, defrauded the CA EDD. The Taylors registered fake companies with CA EDD and submitted fraudulent UI claims in their own names and the names of others, including identities that were stolen. To access the funds, the defendants used CA EDD-issued debit cards to make cash withdrawals at ATMs.

This is a joint investigation with the CA EDD-Investigation Division, the USPIS, and the U.S. Marshals Service. *United States v. Catrina Gipson et al.* (C.D. California)

Georgia Man Sentenced to Federal Prison for CARES Act Unemployment Fraud

On May 13, 2025, Brandon Carter was sentenced to 78 months in prison for his role in submitting fraudulent UI claims to the Alabama Department of Labor (AL DOL).

From approximately March 2020 through September 2020, Carter and his co-conspirators submitted numerous fraudulent UI claims to AL DOL. He falsely claimed Alabama residency, used multiple aliases, and submitted fictitious names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, and other fraudulent information to support the claims. Carter and his co-conspirators filed claims from hotels, using virtual private networks to mask their identities. As a result, AL DOL disbursed UI benefits via direct deposits into bank accounts controlled by the defendants. In addition, debit cards containing UI benefits were mailed to addresses the conspirators controlled, including an abandoned apartment complex where Carter and his co-conspirators set up mailboxes to receive the UI debit cards. In total, the scheme caused a loss of more than \$800,000 to the UI program.

This is a joint investigation with the AL DOL, the USPIS, the USSS, the SSA-OIG, the AL Department of Transportation, and the AL State Bureau of Investigations. *United States v. Brandon Cody Carter* (M.D. Alabama)

Former State of California Employee and Ex-Boyfriend Sentenced for Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On May 9, 2025, Phyllis Stitt, a former CA EDD employee, and her ex-boyfriend, Kenneth Riley, were both sentenced to 20 months in prison for their involvement in a UI fraud scheme. Stitt was ordered to pay approximately \$768,000 in restitution, and Riley was ordered to pay more than \$611,000 in restitution.

Stitt and Riley had been in a romantic relationship while Stitt was employed by the CA EDD as an employment program representative. Her job duties included determining claimant eligibility for UI benefits and performing claim processing activities.

From March 2020 to September 2021, Stitt acquired the names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, and other PII of identity theft victims while working at CA EDD. She then filed fraudulent claims for UI benefits using the stolen PII without the victims' knowledge or consent. Stitt also backdated the

fraudulent claims to maximize the amount of UI benefits paid. She then certified the fraudulent claims that included the victims' employment history, driver's license information, and employment status. Many of the victims were ineligible to receive these benefits because they were actively employed or deceased.

As a result, Stitt and Riley received debit cards, which were loaded with UI benefits, that were mailed to addresses they controlled. To access the stolen funds, Riley and others made cash withdrawals, bank transfers, and retail purchases.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI and the CA EDD-Investigation Division. *United States v. Phillis Hope Stitt et al.* (C.D. California)

Virginia Man Sentenced to 70 Months in Prison for Using Stolen Identities to Defraud Pandemic-Related Unemployment Insurance Program

On April 16, 2025, Dewaynald Gibbs was sentenced to 70 months in prison and ordered to pay more than \$650,000 in restitution for his role in a pandemic-related UI fraud scheme.

From approximately July 2020 to April 2021, Gibbs submitted fraudulent UI applications to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) to obtain hundreds of thousands of dollars in UI benefits by using the stolen personal identifiable information of other individuals, including identity theft victims. The fraudulent UI claims were discovered after a review identified multiple applications sharing certain similarities. Many of the UI claims had the same name for the former employer, mailing addresses associated with Gibbs, and the same telephone number. As a result of Gibbs' fraud, the VEC mailed debit cards to addresses that he controlled, enabling him and others to use the debit cards for their personal financial gain.

Gibbs filed dozens of fraudulent UI claims that resulted in VEC approving approximately \$659,000 in UI benefits.

This was a joint investigation with the DHS-OIG. *United States v. Dwaynald Gibbs* (E.D. Virginia)

Texas Woman Sentenced for Filing Fraudulent Applications for Multiple Government Disaster and Pandemic Relief Programs

On May 1, 2025, Cora Chantail Custard was sentenced to 57 months in prison and ordered to pay more than \$620,000 in restitution for her role in a conspiracy to defraud a variety of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act programs.

From March 2020 to March 2021, Custard submitted more than 100 fraudulent pandemic-related UI claims in Michigan, Illinois and several other states. At least 20 of those claims resulted in payouts totaling nearly \$200,000.

Custard used social media to promote her efforts in furtherance of the fraud scheme. She used Facebook to advertise services to file fraudulent disaster relief claims. Her posts repeatedly described

the scheme to obtain between \$6,000 and \$8,000 for an application within days of filing. Custard also submitted more than 100 fraudulent Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) applications, 36 of which resulted in advance payments of about \$345,000. Additionally, she filed at least 30 fraudulent Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster benefit applications related to two hurricanes in 2020. At least 16 of those fraudulent applications resulted in the disbursement of approximately \$75,000.

This is a joint investigation with the DHS-OIG, the U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, the SSA-OIG, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)-OIG, and the IRS-CI. *United States v. Cora Chantail Custard* (S.D. Texas)

Maryland Defendant Sentenced to More Than 7 Years in Prison for Pandemic Unemployment Insurance Benefits Scheme

On April 3, 2025, Michael Cooley, Jr. was sentenced to 87 months in prison and ordered to pay more than \$310,000 in restitution for his participation in a scheme to fraudulently obtain pandemic-related UI benefits.

Additionally, on April 3, 2025 and April 22, 2025, Cooley's co-defendants, Isiah Lewis and Alonzo Brown, each pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft for their respective roles in the UI fraud scheme.

From approximately June 2020 to March 2021, Cooley, Lewis, and Brown conspired to devise and execute a scheme to defraud multiple SWAs, including the MD DOL and the CA EDD, of more than \$800,000 in UI benefits. As a result, the defendants successfully obtained more than \$300,000 in stolen funds. Cooley and his co-defendants used the PII of more than 60 individuals, including identity theft victims, to file fraudulent UI applications with the MD DOL and the CA EDD. The conspirators used anonymous email addresses to obscure their identities and avoid detection. Debit cards, which were loaded with UI benefit funds, were sent to addresses that were controlled by the defendants. Cooley and his co-defendants flew to California to retrieve some of the debit cards to make cash withdrawals and purchase luxury items.

This is a joint investigation with the IRS-CI as part of the Maryland COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Strike Force. *United States v. Michael Cooley Jr. et al.* (D. Maryland)

Louisiana Residents Pled Guilty in Pandemic Relief and Health Care Fraud Scheme

On May 8, 2025, Kevan Andre Hills, Devin Tyrone Stampley Jr., and Asia Deshan Guess pled guilty to obtaining funds from federal pandemic assistance programs by submitting fraudulent applications. They also pled guilty for their roles in schemes to obtain controlled substances from pharmacies by using fraudulent prescriptions and the stolen identities of medical professionals. They pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud. Hills and Stampley pled guilty to one count of aggravated identity theft and one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Stampley pled guilty to one count of burglary of a pharmacy. Guess pled guilty to one count of theft of government funds.

Guess fraudulently applied for more than \$125,000 in PUA benefits. She also submitted fraudulent claims for UI benefits to the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the Maine Department of Labor, and numerous other SWAs. Guess falsified application details, such as her employment history and residency, to appear eligible for PUA funds and other benefits. In total, she fraudulently obtained more than \$15,000 in UI benefits.

Hills, Stampley, and Guess submitted fraudulent prescriptions for controlled substances to Medicaid. Without the providers' knowledge, they used DEA registration numbers and other identifying information of several physicians and other medical providers to submit fraudulent prescriptions. To unlawfully obtain controlled substances for resale, Stampley also burglarized a pharmacy in Louisiana.

Further, the defendants submitted and assisted others to submit numerous fraudulent applications for nearly \$300,000 in funds from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and EIDL programs. Hills, Stampley, and their co-conspirators submitted fraudulent bank statements, tax forms, and other documents in support of the fraudulent PPP applications. In total, they defrauded the programs of at least \$87,000 by posing as small business owners and residents in need of assistance.

This is a joint investigation with the HHS-OIG and the DEA. *United States v. Hills et al.* (M.D. Louisiana)

Former State of Michigan Employee Pled Guilty for Role in Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On May 8, 2025, Timeka Johnson, a former MUIA employee, pled guilty to aggravated identity theft and conspiracy to commit wire fraud for her involvement in a scheme to defraud the state of Michigan of more than \$250,000 in UI benefits.

While employed with the MUIA, Johnson's duties included reviewing, processing, and verifying the legitimacy of UI claims. Johnson used her access to fraudulently process UI claims in the names of third parties. In furtherance of the scheme and without authorization, she accessed UI claim information, dismissed and improperly closed fraud prevention triggers and information requests, and uploaded false and fraudulent documentation to support fraudulent UI claims. Johnson also falsely certified UI claimants as being eligible for assistance, caused the issuance of unauthorized debit cards, and made cash withdrawals of the stolen funds.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI, the DHS-OIG, the MUIA, and the USPIS. *United States v. Timeka Johnson et al.* (E.D. Michigan)

Previously Convicted Maryland Felon Sentenced to More Than 26 Years in Prison for Drug and Firearm Offenses, Wire Fraud, and Aggravated Identity Theft

On April 9, 2025, Ryan Dales was sentenced to 312 months in prison for unlawful possession of a firearm as a felon, possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime, as well as wire fraud, and aggravated identity theft for his role in multi-faceted fraud schemes, including filing fraudulent pandemic-related UI claims with the MD DOL.

In December 2024, a federal jury found Dales guilty of unlawfully possessing a firearm as a felon, possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. Additionally, Dales faced a second trial on wire fraud and aggravated identity theft charges, but, on January 10, 2025, Dales pled guilty.

From December 2020 to September 2022, Dales initially served a federal sentence for bank fraud, conspiracy, and aggravated identity theft. While living in a halfway house on supervised release, he attempted to defraud the MD DOL, the SBA, and various businesses and financial institutions of more than \$25,000 in pandemic relief funds. Dales submitted fraudulent claims for UI benefits, and he attempted to fraudulently obtain \$8,000 in EIDL funds from the SBA. He also received more than \$95,000 from the sale of high-end riding lawn mowers, which he purchased from various outdoor equipment retailers by securing lines of credit using the PII of identity theft victims.

On January 20, 2023, Dales was arrested, and law enforcement executed a federal search warrant at his luxury apartment. They located and seized various items used in connection with selling drugs, including loaded firearms and rounds of ammunition. In addition, law enforcement seized dangerous controlled substances, fentanyl packaged for street-level distribution, drug paraphernalia, and cell phones. They also seized items connected with Dales' fraud and identity theft schemes, including computers, an embosser and ID card printer, security holograms, gift cards, a card printer and card reader, and blank PVC cards. It was also revealed that he obtained the PII of identity theft victims on the dark web.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI. *United States v. Ryan E. Dales* (D. Maryland)