Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Labor

OIG Investigations Newsletter

July 1, 2025–September 30, 2025
Volume 57

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.

Maryland Co-Conspirators Convicted and Sentenced for $3.5 Million Unemployment Insurance Fraud Conspiracy, Firearms, and Drug Trafficking Crimes

On July 21, 2025, Zakria Hussain pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft, for his role in a $3.5 million pandemic-related unemployment insurance (UI) fraud scheme. On August 7, 2025, Lawrence Harris pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft for his role in the scheme. He also pled guilty to possession of a machine gun, possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance, and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. On September 8, 2025, Ahmed Hussain was sentenced to 102 months in prison for his role in the scheme as well as for firearm and drug offenses. He was also ordered to pay more than $557,000 in restitution for the UI fraud.

Between approximately January 2021 and September 2023, the Hussains and Harris conspired with other co-defendants, including former contractors who provided services directly to the Maryland Department of Labor (MD DOL). The contractors were issued laptop computers that allowed remote access to MD DOL systems, such as the UI claims system. The Hussains, Harris, and their co-conspirators used the laptops to access non-public UI data and databases maintained by MD DOL to change information on existing UI claims, including email addresses, account passwords, and payment methods. Using the personal identifiable information (PII) of identity theft victims, they also made numerous false statements and misrepresentations on UI applications. This enabled them to obtain the highest amount of available UI benefits that would be paid via debit cards that they controlled. The co-conspirators uploaded and approved documents required by MD DOL to support UI claims, removed fraud holds on UI claims, and certified weeks of unemployment for payment in the MD DOL system.

On November 16, 2022, while law enforcement executed a search warrant at his home, Harris threw a firearm and a bag of marijuana out the window of his bedroom. Law enforcement then searched the residence and discovered three additional firearms, including one that functioned as a machine gun. Law enforcement also recovered approximately 37 pounds of marijuana that Harris intended to distribute. On the same date, law enforcement also executed a residential search warrant at Ahmed Hussain's home where they found that he possessed a stolen handgun, as well as 60 pounds of marijuana, drug distribution baggies, and 229 rounds of ammunition. Ahmed Hussain had been previously convicted of an offense punishable by more than one year imprisonment, so he was prohibited from possessing a firearm or ammunition.

This is a joint investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as part of the Maryland COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Strike Force. *United State*s v. *Zakria Hussain; United States* v. *Lawrence Nathaniel Harris; United States* v. *Ahmed Hussain* (D. Maryland)

California Woman Sentenced to 4 Years in Prison for Unemployment Insurance Fraud

On August 7, 2025, Tabitha Markle was sentenced to 4 years and 2 months in prison and ordered to pay more than $2.59 million in restitution for her involvement in a scheme to defraud the UI program during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Between April 2020 and January 2021, Markle defrauded the California Employment Development Department (CA EDD) and the U.S. government of UI benefits. Markle collected PII, including names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers and other information. She then used that information to submit more than 150 fraudulent applications for UI benefits to CA EDD from her residence. The applications represented that the beneficiaries were self-employed when, in fact, they were not. Markle created fictional jobs for claimants, such as manicurist, construction painter, hair stylist/barber, personal attendant, music technician, and landscaper. Markle also filed UI applications for many inmates at state prisons and county jails whom she knew were unable to work due to their incarcerated status, and thus were ineligible for benefits.

In furtherance of the scheme, Markle and her associates caused UI debit cards to be mailed to addresses she listed in the fraudulent applications. She then used the cards, which were issued in the names of the supposed beneficiaries, to withdraw cash from ATMs throughout California. Markle and her associates often appeared in ATM surveillance photos taking out large amounts of cash from the cards. She and her criminal associates fraudulently obtained more than $2.59 million.

This was a joint investigation with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation-OIG and the CA EDD. *United States* v. *Tabitha Markle* (N.D. California)

California Couple Sentenced to More Than 12 Years in Prison for Unemployment Insurance Fraud

On August 7, 2025, Deshawn Campbell and Rochelle Pasley were sentenced to 87 months and 65 months, respectively, and ordered to pay joint and several restitution of more than $1.15 million for their involvement in an UI fraud scheme aimed at the state of California.

Between June 2020 and December 2020, Campbell and Pasley filed fraudulent UI claims with the CA EDD seeking Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits under the CARES Act. During the conspiracy, the defendants utilized the PII of other individuals and used the PII to submit dozens of fraudulent claims. The claims falsely represented, among other things, that the claimants had recently lost employment or were unable to find employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These claims were fraudulent as the claimants were not California residents, had not lost their jobs due to the pandemic, and were otherwise ineligible for UI benefits.

In furtherance of the scheme, both Campbell and Pasley used mailing addresses that were under their control or under the control of their family and friends. CA EDD approved more than 50 of the fraudulent claims and authorized a financial institution to mail out CA EDD debit cards containing benefits. Both Campbell and Pasley then obtained these debit cards to withdraw funds at ATMs throughout California and to make direct purchases—all for their personal benefit. The scheme resulted in CA EDD paying out more than $1 million.

This is a joint investigation with the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) and the CA EDD. *United States* v. *Deshawn Campbell et al.* (E.D. California)

Former Amtrak Employee Sentenced to More Than 2 Years in Federal Prison for COVID-19 Fraud

On July 17, 2025, Lizette Lathon, a former Amtrak employee, was sentenced to 25 months in federal prison for conspiring with her husband to steal nearly $1 million in pandemic-related UI benefits and for fraudulently obtaining more than $63,000 in sickness benefits while she worked at the passenger railroad company. She was also ordered to pay more than $1 million in restitution.

From March 2020 through March 2021, Lathon submitted fraudulent applications with the CA EDD for UI benefits by using names, Social Security numbers, and dates of birth that she obtained from former clients of her tax-preparation businesses without their permission. On the applications, she falsely asserted inflated income for the named claimants—many of whom had never lived in California—to receive the maximum benefit amount.

As a result of the fraudulent claims, CA EDD authorized a financial institution to issue debit cards in the names of Lathon's former clients. The cards were mailed to addresses that she and her family controlled. Lathon and her husband then used the debit cards to make cash withdrawals at ATMs and to make purchases at retail stores.

During the conspiracy, Lathon and her husband caused at least 44 fraudulent UI claims to be filed, resulting in losses to EDD and the U.S. Treasury of more than $998,000.

Lathon, who was employed at Amtrak from 2000 to 2021, also schemed to defraud the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) of sickness benefit payments by filing forged and false claims that she was being treated by a medical professional for pain and anxiety. Through this scheme, which lasted from September 2014 to January 2020, Lathon fraudulently obtained approximately $63,000 in sickness benefit payments.

This was a joint investigation with the Amtrak-OIG, the RRB-OIG, the DOL-Employee Benefits Security Administration, the CA EDD, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Homeland Security Investigations, and the USPIS. *United States* v. *Lizette Lathon* (C.D. California)

Indianapolis Man Sentenced to Prison for Stealing Pandemic Relief Funds

On August 1, 2025, Johnson Omodusonu pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit access device fraud and one count of access device fraud. On the same day, Omodusonu was sentenced to 24 months in prison and ordered to pay approximately $520,000 in restitution for his role in a COVID-19 pandemic-relief fraud scheme.

From approximately August 2020 to October 2020, Omodusonu and his co-conspirators acquired more than 165 UI debit cards that were periodically loaded with UI benefits. None of the debt cards belonged to the conspiracy members as they were all issued in the names of identity theft victims. To obtain the debit cards, other conspiracy members, who were located outside the United States, used stolen PII to file numerous false UI claims with various state workforce agencies.

Omodusonu and his co-conspirators subsequently used the debit cards to make more than 525 cash withdrawals at various ATMs in and around Indianapolis, Indiana, stealing more than $520,000 in benefits. They took a portion of the proceeds for their personal benefit and then delivered the remaining cash to other co-conspirators.

This investigation is joint with the FBI and the USPIS. *United States* v. *Johnson Omodusonu* (S.D. Indiana)

Baltimore Woman Pled Guilty to Role in $3.2 Million Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

On August 11, 2025, Tyshawna Davis pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft for her role in a pandemic-related UI fraud scheme that defrauded the MD DOL.

From approximately May 2020 to May 2021, Davis 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. Davis directed certain co-conspirators to obtain the PII of identity theft victims, which Davis and her co-conspirators then used in the submission of fraudulent UI claims to MD DOL. Davis also created an email account that she and her co-conspirators used as the common contact email address on more than 150 fraudulent UI claims.

An Internet Protocol address associated with Davis was used more than 1,500 times to log into the UI claim system of MD DOL. During these logins, she accessed UI claims involving at least 60 different individuals who were identity theft victims.

Once MD DOL disbursed the UI benefits via the pre-paid debit cards, Davis made ATM withdrawals to obtain the stolen funds. Through text messages to her co-conspirators, she provided instructions about how fraudulent proceeds would be divided among themselves.

Davis 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. *Tyshawna Davis et al.* (D. Maryland)

Two Defendants Pled Guilty to Fraud Scheme Involving Data Stolen from Hospital Patients

On July 28, 2025 and August 6, 2025, Charlene Marte and Wilkens Estrella, respectively, pled guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bank fraud in a scheme to fraudulently obtain pandemic relief funds from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL). The scheme resulted in almost $1 million in actual losses. Estrella also pled guilty to violating the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act through the wrongful disclosure of individually identifiable health information.

From at least 2020 to 2022, Estrella and Marte misused the names, Social Security numbers, and other PII belonging to hundreds of individuals to fraudulently obtain approximately $1.6 million in COVID-19 stimulus checks and tax refunds from the IRS, and UI benefits from NYSDOL. They also arranged for these and other funds to be loaded onto hundreds of debit cards that they opened in other individual's names obtained using stolen data. They then had the debit cards mailed to homes associated with them or their family members. Estrella, a former clerk at a New York hospital, accessed and stole data of at least 4,005 hospital patients for use in the fraud scheme.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI and the IRS. *United States* v. *Wilkens Estrella and Charlene Marte* (S.D. New York)

Houston Doctor to Pay More Than $2 Million to Settle Allegations of Fraudulent Billing of Federal Programs

On August 11, 2025, Ajay Aggarwal, an anesthesiologist and pain medicine doctor, agreed to pay more than $2 million to resolve allegations that he submitted false claims to federally funded health care programs, including DOL's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP).

Aggarwal, a sole proprietorship, and PRWCSWTX LLC, are entities that Aggarwal used to conduct his medical practice. From November 2021 to March 2023, Aggarwal billed for the surgical implantation of neurostimulator electrodes. These procedures, which are invasive and typically require the use of an operating room, were primarily submitted for reimbursement to OWCP and Medicare. Due to the complex nature of these surgical interventions, federally funded health care programs usually reimburse providers thousands of dollars per procedure.

According to the allegations, Aggarwal submitted inaccurate billing for these high-cost treatments. Patients allegedly received devices used for electro-acupuncture that only involved inserting monofilament wire into patients' ears and taping the neurostimulator behind the ear. These device placements took place in Aggarwal's clinic, as opposed to a hospital or surgical center, and no incision was made on a patient.

This is a joint civil investigation with the U.S. Postal Service-OIG, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management-OIG, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs–OIG, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services–OIG. (S.D. Texas)

Former Bureau of Labor Statistics Economist Sentenced after Pleading Guilty to Making False Statements

On July 17, 2025, Matthew Hong, a former economist with DOL's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), was sentenced to 36 months of supervised release and ordered to pay restitution of more than $13,300 to BLS for making false statements. This was in connection with sick leave compensation that he received from his federal government employer when he was not sick but instead was working remotely for a private company.

Hong worked as a BLS economist from April 2020 until July 2023. He worked in a role that provided him with access to certain Principal Federal Economic Indicators (PFEI), such as employment and unemployment data prior to its public disclosure. This information was subject to strict security procedures and safeguards due to the PFEI's sensitivity and ability to affect financial markets if prematurely disclosed.

In June 2022, while still employed at BLS and working remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Hong began full-time employment as a senior associate at a global financial institution in New York.

Between June 2022 and July 2023, Hong made dozens of entries in BLS's time-and-attendance system that falsely represented he was sick. Hong sought sick leave compensation, despite the fact that he was not sick, but instead was working for a private financial institution. Based on these false statements, Hong received more than $13,300 in sick leave compensation from BLS.

United States v. *Matthew Hong* (D. District of Columbia)

Former Corporate Vice President Pled Guilty to Violating the Federal Anti-Kickback Statute

On July 23, 2025, Robert L. Rubin pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate the federal Anti-Kickback Statute.

From 2010 to 2020, Rubin served as a vice president for a company (Company-1) with headquarters in Herndon, Virginia, that engaged in the business of providing protective security officers at federal workplaces in numerous states. As an executive at Company-1, Rubin held a hidden 33% interest in a subcontractor to Company-1 through his consulting business, Cyrus Strategies, based in Bethesda, Maryland. In exchange for this hidden 33% interest in the subcontractor's proceeds, Rubin assisted in obtaining and performing lucrative subcontracts on behalf of Company-1.

The subcontractor in question, and its affiliated entities, were awarded more than $100 million in contract proceeds. Additionally, Rubin held a hidden 20% interest in a separate subcontractor to Company-1, which was owned and operated by the wife of another Company-1 executive. In exchange for his hidden interest and control of this subcontractor, Rubin assisted in obtaining and performing subcontracts on behalf of the subcontractor. The payment of 20% of the profits from the subcontractor to Rubin was, in part, for the purpose of improperly obtaining and rewarding favorable treatment from Company-1 in connection with awarding subcontracts. *United States* v. *Robert Louis Rubin* (E.D. Virginia)

Six Former Cult Members Sentenced for Lengthy Forced Labor Conspiracy to Compel Labor of Minors

On August 7, 2025, six former high-ranking members of the United Nation of Islam (UNOI) were sentenced for their involvement in a forced labor and forced labor conspiracy scheme. Kaaba Majeed was sentenced to 10 years in prison; James Staton and Randolph Rodney Hadley were sentenced to 5 years in prison; Daniel Aubrey Jenkins and Dana Peach were sentenced to 4 years in prison, and Yunus Rassoul was sentenced to 5 years probation. Rassoul subsequently entered into a restitution and appeal agreement to pay $150,000 to the victims.

From October 2000 through November 2012, the defendants conspired to enforce rules requiring UNOI members to perform unpaid labor—using beatings, threats, punishments, isolation, and coercion to compel the labor of over a dozen victims, including minors as young as eight years old. Victims worked without pay for up to 16 hours a day in UNOI-owned and operated businesses in Kansas, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Georgia, and other states. The defendants also forced the victims to perform unpaid childcare and domestic service in the defendants' homes. While the victims were housed in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions with limited food and water, the defendants lived comfortably.

During a September 2024 trial, it was proven that the defendants made false promises of education, life skills training, and job training to induce parents to send their children to Kansas. After isolating the victims from their families and making them fully dependent on UNOI, the defendants required the victims to attend UNOI's unlicensed and unaccredited school. They also restricted and monitored the victims' communications with others, including regarding the whereabouts of the victims.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI. *United States* v. *Kaaba Majeed et al.* (D. Kansas)

Kentucky Man Pled Guilty to Conspiring to Cover Up Coal Mine Fire in Illinois

On August 28, 2025, Timothy Brandon Parsons pled guilty to conspiring to defraud DOL's Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) in relation to an underground fire that occurred in the MC#1 Mine in Franklin County, Illinois, in August 2021.

On August 12, 2021, Parsons was the mine manager when an underground fire was ignited by a torch used to cut collapsed steel beams. Rather than implementing the approved Mine Emergency Evacuation and Firefighting Plan, Parsons and conspirators agreed that they would not evacuate miners or notify MSHA. Despite gas detectors indicating the dangerous presence of carbon monoxide, miners continued to work during firefighting efforts from August 12-13.

On August 13, 2025, Parsons tried to conceal the existence of the fire by evacuating the mine under the false pretense that a coal carrying belt was broken. Later, MSHA received an anonymous tip about the fire and ordered that the mine be evacuated after inspectors confirmed the fire's existence. Despite the evacuation order and without MSHA's permission, the conspirators twice re-entered the mine to assess the fire and manipulate underground conditions so MSHA would allow mining to resume. Conspiracy members did not wear the devices designed to track the underground location of miners, and they made false entries in records.

This is a joint investigation with the FBI. *United States* v. *Timothy Brandon Parsons* (S.D. Illinois)