



## Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

### News Release

For Immediate Release: July 14, 2011

### Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Obtaining Convictions for Unemployment Compensation Fraud

MONTGOMERY- Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that the Department has successfully prosecuted several Alabamians for unemployment compensation fraud. The following individuals were charged with violating the Alabama Unemployment Compensation Law by making false statements in claims for benefits.

- Judas Knight, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County District Court on June 21, 2011. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Knight received a total of \$2,533.00 in unemployment benefits to which he was not entitled.

Knight was found guilty and sentenced to one year which was suspended for 24 months. He was fined \$250.00, required to pay court costs and to repay the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Amy Whatley, of Tyler, was tried in Dallas County District Court on May 18, 2011. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Whatley received a total of \$3, 149.00 in unemployment benefits to which she was not entitled.

Whatley was found guilty and sentenced to 90 days in jail, suspended two years, and was also required to pay court costs and to repay the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Cedric Gardner, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on May 3, 2011. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Gardner received a total of \$10,149.00 in unemployment benefits to which he was not entitled.

Gardner pled guilty and was sentenced to one year jail time, suspended two years, and was also required to pay the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Retecia Jackson, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on April 26, 2011. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jackson received a total of \$6,599.00 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Jackson pled guilty and was sentenced to one year jail time, suspended two years, and was also required to repay the amount of benefits received illegally.

“At the Department of Industrial Relations we take claims of unemployment compensation fraud very seriously, and we pursue those cases aggressively,” said Surtees. “Especially now in these tough economic times we want to assure that those who are entitled to benefits receive them but that those who try to defraud the system do not go unpunished. We work diligently with the local District Attorney Offices to make sure that we identify and prosecute those individuals who are committing these crimes.”

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*Members of the media needing more information should contact Public Information Officer Jenna Murphy at (334) 353-1548.*