



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: March 12, 2013

Alabama Department of Labor Obtaining Convictions for Unemployment Compensation Fraud

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner 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:

- Ernest Wade, Jr., of Alabaster, was tried in Shelby County District Court on March 6, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Wade received a total of \$1,658 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Wade pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail, which was suspended for two years, and 24 months of unsupervised probation. He was also ordered to pay a \$100 fine, court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Carly D. Jackson, of Millbrook, was tried in Elmore County District Court on March 5, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jackson received a total of \$3,634 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Jackson pled guilty and was sentenced to serve 90 days in jail, which was suspended, and 24 months of unsupervised probation. She was also fined \$100 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Bernita A. Thornton, of Camp Hill, was tried in Tallpoosa County District Court on February 12, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Thornton received a total of \$1,070 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Thornton pled guilty and was sentenced to 12 months in jail, suspended for two years pending restitution. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Debra J. Carter, of Sylacauga, was tried in Talladega County District Court on January 9, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Carter received a total of \$2,381 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Carter pled guilty and was sentenced to 60 days in jail, which was suspended for 12 months. She had already paid full restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally prior to her court date.

- Johnny J. Gilbert, of Munford, was tried in Talladega County District Court on February 7, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Gilbert received a total of \$1,040 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Gilbert pled guilty and was required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- James D. Watson, of Dothan, was tried in Houston County District Court on February 11, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Watson received a total of \$3,195 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Watson pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, which was suspended for two years, and given two years of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Jimmy L. Foster, of Tallassee, was tried in Elmore County District Court on February 14, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Foster received a total of \$5,841 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Foster pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Henry W. Carey, of Wetumpka, was tried in Elmore County District Court on February 14, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Carey received a total of \$3,264 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Carey pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution. He was also fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Kimberly McCombs, of Odenville, was tried in St. Clair County District Court on February 13, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McCombs received a total of \$1,518 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

McCombs pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. She was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Samuel L. Green, of Anniston, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on February 5, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Green received a total of \$3,244 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Green pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. He was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Holly E. Stephenson, of Eclectic, was tried in Elmore County District Court on February 14, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Stephenson received a total of \$10,360 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Stephenson pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. She was fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Sharon L. Adair, of Anniston, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on February 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Adair received a total of \$5,836 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Adair pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. She was fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Paula R. Watts, of Alexander City, was tried in Tallapoosa County District Court on February 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Watts received a total of \$6,192 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Watts pled guilty and was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Melvin Lewis Robinson, of Roanoke, was tried in Randolph County District Court on February 27, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Robinson received a total of \$6,043 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Robinson pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, suspended for two years. He was also ordered to complete 24 hours of community service, fined \$150, and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

“We at the Alabama Department of Labor want people to know that we are aggressively

pursuing cases of unemployment compensation fraud,” said Surtees. “Especially in these economic times, we want to make sure that all who are entitled to benefits receive them. But at the same time, we will not allow those who deliberately try to defraud the system to go unpunished. We are working with local District Attorney Offices to make sure that we can identify and prosecute those individuals who are committing these crimes.”

Suspected unemployment compensation fraud may be reported to the Alabama Department of Labor by calling 1-800-392-8019.

###

Members of the media seeking more information should contact Communications Director Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.