



## Alabama Department of Labor

### News Release

For Immediate Release: April 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:

- Brodrick Leonard, of Alexander City, was tried in Tallapoosa County District Court on March 12, 2013. An investigation by Labor’s Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Leonard received a total of \$4,693 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Leonard pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended for two years, and 24 months of unsupervised probation. He was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Inger Richardson, of Alexander City, was tried in Tallapoosa County District Court on March 12, 2013. An investigation by Labor’s Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Richardson received a total of \$7,663 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Richardson pled guilty and was sentenced to serve one year in jail, which was suspended for two years, and 24 months of unsupervised probation. She was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Michael McLemore, of Lineville, was tried in Clay County District Court on January 8, 2013. An investigation by Labor’s Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McLemore received a total of \$4,903 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

McLemore pled guilty and was sentenced to 60 days in jail, suspended for two years pending restitution. He was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount

of benefits received illegally.

- William E. Horton, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on March 12, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Horton received a total of \$3,474 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Horton pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended, and two years of unsupervised probation. He was fined \$25 and was order to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Joseph W. Chambless, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on March 11, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Chambless received a total of \$1,969 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Chambless pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended 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.

- Eboni Eatman, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on March 4, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Eatman received a total of \$1,651 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

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

- Amy G. Johnson, of Wetumpka, was tried in Elmore County District Court on March 14, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Johnson received a total of \$3,753 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Johnson pled guilty and was fined \$100. Restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally had already been paid prior to the court date.

- Teresa M. Knight, of Montgomery, was tried in Montgomery County District Court on March 18, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Knight received a total of \$704 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Knight pled guilty and was sentenced to one year of supervised probation. She was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Cressiendra Echols, of Auburn, was tried in Lee County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Echols received a total of \$10,304 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Echols pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended pending

restitution. She was also required to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Crystal McDonald, of Verbena, was tried in Chilton County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McDonald received a total of \$10,970 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

McDonald pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. She was also fined \$400 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Monica White, of Clanton, was tried in Chilton County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that White received a total of \$1,592 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

White pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. She was fined \$400 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Amy Ray, of Lanett, was tried in Chambers County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Ray received a total of \$1,238 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Ray pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended pending restitution. She was required to pay court costs and \$350, which was the balance of restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Tammler Finley, of LaFayette, was tried in Chambers County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Finley received a total of \$2,593 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Finley pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended pending restitution.

- Kimberly Johnson, of Valley, was tried in Chambers County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Johnson received a total of \$2,921 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Johnson pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, suspended pending restitution in the amount of \$291, the balance remaining on restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- David McCulloh, of Valley, was tried in Chambers County District Court on March 19, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McCulloh received a total of \$2,565 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

McColloh pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended pending restitution. He was also required to pay 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.

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