



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

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Alabama Department of Labor Obtaining Convictions for Unemployment Compensation Fraud

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington 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:

- Tracey A. Youngblood, of Union Springs, was tried in Bullock County District Court on June 28, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Youngblood received a total of \$4,076 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

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

- Jimmy A. Keeton, of Albertville, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on August 12, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Keeton received a total of \$5,158 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Keeton pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$500 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Joseph Reese, Jr., of Elmore, was tried in Elmore County District Court on September 9, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Reese received a total of \$3,967 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Reese pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail, which was suspended, and given two years of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$100 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Kerys Kitts Davis, of Fairfield, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on September 15, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Davis received a total of \$1,764 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Davis pled guilty and was sentenced to two years in jail, which was suspended, and given two years of probation. She was also fined \$100 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Pattie Elizabeth Ford, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County District Court on September 4, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Ford received a total of \$3,150 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Ford was found guilty and was sentenced to one day in jail, which was counted as time served. She was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally and had already repaid \$2,500 prior to her release.

- Cynthia M. Pryor, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County District Court on June 10, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Pryor received a total of \$2,480 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

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

- Joyce C. Redd, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County District Court on June 10, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Redd received a total of \$3,159 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

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

- Jeffery Lee Smith, III, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County District Court on July 23, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Smith received a total of \$2,118 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Smith was found guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail, which was suspended for 90 days pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. He was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Aurelius D. Summers, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County District Court on June 12, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Summers received a total of \$2,366 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Per a pre-trial diversion agreement, Summers was given six months to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Patrick J. Duster, of Montgomery, was tried in Montgomery County District Court on

April 21, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Duster received a total of \$3,949 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

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

- Cheryl Sadler, of Montgomery, was tried in Montgomery County District Court on July 28, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Sadler received a total of \$2,973 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Sadler was found guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended, and given two years of unsupervised probation. She was also fined \$100 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

The following individuals were charged with Theft of Property:

- Michael K. Nelson, of Athens, was tried in Limestone County Circuit Court on May 20, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Nelson received a total of \$2,718 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Nelson pled guilty to Theft of Property, 3rd degree, and was sentenced to one year in jail which was suspended for two years. He was also required to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Daniel Watson, of Athens, was tried in Limestone County Circuit Court on August 5, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Watson received a total of \$1,334 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Watson pled guilty to Theft of Property, 3rd degree, and was sentenced to one year in jail which was suspended for two years. He was also required to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Lance W. Price, of Florence, was tried in Lauderdale County Circuit Court on February 5, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Price received a total of \$4,630 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Price pled guilty to Theft of Property, 2nd degree, and was sentenced to 13 months in jail and was ordered to be placed on probation for five years thereafter. He was also required to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

“Unemployment compensation benefits can serve as a lifeline to those who truly need them,” said Washington. “However, we want to send a message to those who would knowingly defraud the system in order to obtain benefits they aren't entitled to: This is a crime and you will be

prosecuted.”

“Our investigators are continuously working with local District Attorney Offices in order to identify and prosecute those individuals who are committing these crimes. I would also like to remind employers that their timely reporting of new hires is one of the best tools we have to prevent unemployment fraud.”

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

Employers may find more information regarding reporting new hires at <http://www.labor.alabama.gov/nh>.

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