



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: April 21, 2015

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:

- Tamara D. Grace, of Daphne, was tried in Baldwin County Circuit Court on February 2, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Grace received a total of \$6,765 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Grace pled guilty and was sentenced to a three year pre-trial diversion program. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Kendall A. Hurst, of Bay Minette, was tried in Baldwin County Circuit Court on February 23 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Hurst received a total of \$6,262 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Hurst pled guilty and was sentenced to 46 months in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and three years of supervised probation. He was also fined \$50, ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$50, court costs, and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Antonio T. McCord, of Bay Minette, was tried in Baldwin County Circuit Court on February 23, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McCord received a total of \$8,898 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

McCord pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and placed on two years of supervised probation. He was also fined \$100, ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$100, court costs, and restitution in the

amount of benefits received illegally.

- Dennis Evan Adams, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on March 31, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Adams received a total of \$9,257 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Adams pled guilty and was sentenced to 69 months in jail, which was split with one year to serve and three years of formal probation after his release. He was also ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$25, court costs, and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Charles Jones, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on March 1, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jones received a total of \$1,313 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Jones pled guilty and was sentenced to five months in jail, which was suspended pending good behavior. He was also ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$25, court costs, and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Eddie Jahmal Lacey, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on March 11, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Lacey received a total of \$3,256 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Lacey pled guilty and was sentenced to three years in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and three years of supervised probation. He was also ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$25, court costs, and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Gloria Jean Mitchell, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on March 23, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Mitchell received a total of \$2,449 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Mitchell pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and two years of unsupervised probation. She was also ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$25, court costs, and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Heather S. Rampulla, of Loxley, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on March 25, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Rampulla received a total of \$3,680 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Rampulla pled guilty and was sentenced to five months in jail, which was suspended pending good behavior, and ordered to complete 80 hours of community service. She was also ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$25 and court costs.

- Quidra M. Thames, of Mt. Vernon, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on March 4,

2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Thames received a total of \$2,114 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Thames pled guilty and was sentenced to 100 hours of community service. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally, after which her case will be dismissed.

- Kari W. Wilson, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on April 1, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Wilson received a total of \$2,536 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Wilson pled guilty and was sentenced to five months in jail, which was suspended pending good behavior. She was also ordered to pay a victims crime fund assessment of \$25, court costs, and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Merissa L. Pittman, of Brookwood, was tried in Tuscaloosa County District Court on January 14, 2016. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Pittman received a total of \$3,502 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Pittman pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail, which was suspended pending restitution. She was also ordered to pay court costs and 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.