

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Middle District of Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, December 16, 2022

Pennsylvania Inmate Sentenced To 11 Months In Prison For Pandemic Unemployment Fraud

HARRISBURG - The United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced that Jeovanny Shultz, age 28, an inmate at the State Correctional Institution at Mercer, was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Christopher C. Conner to 11 months in prison for conspiring to steal pandemic funds.

According to United States Attorney Gerard M. Karam, Shultz pleaded guilty to conspiring with five others to file false claims for unemployment assistance during the pandemic. These defendants gathered personal identification information from inmates housed within the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections system and filed unemployment claims. The payments were mailed to particular addresses in New Cumberland, Pennsylvania, where the funds were accessed. Shultz arranged for the payment of approximately \$11,000 in benefits which he was not entitled to obtain.

Andrew Marszalek, age 24, of New Cumberland, entered a guilty plea to the fraud conspiracy and was sentenced to 18 months in prison. Nicholas Baggio, age 32, an inmate at the State Correctional Institution at Mahanoy, entered a guilty plea to conspiracy to commit mail fraud and was sentenced to one year and a day in prison. Alexis Figueroa, age 32, of Philadelphia, entered a guilty plea to the fraud conspiracy and was sentenced to 18 months in prison. Oscar Martinez, age 30, an inmate at State Correctional Institution at Rockview, pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentencing. Joseph Powles, age 33, of Philadelphia, is wanted as a fugitive.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the United States Department of Labor Office of Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Consiglio is prosecuting the case.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies

across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

All persons charged are presumed to be innocent unless and until found guilty in court.

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Topic(s):
Coronavirus

Component(s):
USAO - Pennsylvania, Middle