



Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

News Release

For Immediate Release: September 7, 2010

Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Obtaining Convictions for Unemployment Compensation Fraud

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director 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.

- Willie Jackson, of Bessemer, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on August 31, 2010. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jackson received a total of \$3,319.00 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Jackson pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended for two years, and ordered to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Phillip B. Lockhart, of Opelika, was tried in Lee County District Court on May 11, 2010. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Lockhart received a total of \$2,751.00 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Lockhart pled guilty and was sentenced to 28 months in jail, which was suspended for 28 months. He was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Carlos L. Babbs, of Anniston, was tried in Talladega County District Court on September 2, 2010. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Babbs received a total of \$6,060.00 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Babbs pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended for three months. He was ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

“We at the Department of Industrial Relations 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 Department of Industrial Relations by calling 1-800-392-8019.

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Members of the media seeking more information should contact Public Information Officer Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.