



# Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

## News Release

For Immediate Release: January 31, 2011

### 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.

- Victoria McCurdy, of Opelika, was tried in Lee County District Court on January 13, 2011. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McCurdy received a total of \$1,082.00 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

McCurdy pled guilty and was ordered to pay court costs as well as restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Shirley J. Taylor, of Florence, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on December 14, 2010. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Taylor received a total of \$4,205.00 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Taylor was found guilty and sentenced to 12 months in jail, which was suspended for two years. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Sherman Smith, of Auburn, was tried in Lee County District Court on January 25, 2011. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Smith received a total of \$4,635.00 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Smith pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended for 12 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.*