



## Alabama Department of Labor

### News Release

For Immediate Release: January 3, 2013

### Alabama Department of Labor Obtaining Convictions for Unemployment Compensation Fraud

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner 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:

- John D. McCollough, of Opelika, was tried in Lee County District Court on Jan. 3, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McCollough received a total of \$865 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

McCollough pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended for one year. He was also ordered to pay a \$50 fine, court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Kastella A. Turner, of Opelika, was tried in Lee County District Court on Dec. 20, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Turner received a total of \$1,537 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Turner pled guilty and was sentenced to serve one year in jail, which was suspended for one year. She was also ordered to complete 20 hours of community service, fined \$500 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Jeanette Johnson, of Anniston, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on Dec. 18, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Johnson received a total of \$5,631 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Johnson pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, suspended for two years pending restitution, and fined \$100. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally. Johnson was also placed on unsupervised probation for two years.

- Sheila A. Spear, of Piedmont, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on Dec. 18, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Spear received a total of \$6,510 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Spear pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, which was suspended for two years, and given two years of unsupervised probation. She was also fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Ruthie M. Davenport, of Troy, was tried in Pike County District Court on Dec. 18, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Davenport received a total of \$3,336 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Davenport pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended. She was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Maurice B. Smith, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on Dec. 5, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Smith received a total of \$8,286 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Smith pled guilty and was sentenced to 10 days in jail, which was suspended for two years. He was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Coliska T. Philpot, of Opelika, was tried in Lee County District Court on Dec. 11, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Philpot received a total of \$4,624 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Philpot pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended for one year pending restitution, and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Larry D. Marbury, of Alexander City, was tried in Tallapoosa County District Court on Dec. 4, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Marbury received a total of \$5,785 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Marbury pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended for one year pending restitution. He was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Glenn E. Bowen, of Alexander City, was tried in Tallapoosa County District Court on Dec. 4, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Bowen received a total of \$2,778 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Bowen pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended for one

year pending restitution. He was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Harold Downs, of Selma, was tried in Dallas County District Court on Dec. 4, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Downs received a total of \$3,737 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Downs pled guilty and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and placed on two years of unsupervised probation. He was required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Calvin Searcy, of Eastaboga, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on Dec. 4, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Searcy received a total of \$1,918 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Searcy pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and placed on two years of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$50 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Tarrance A. Edmondson, of Anniston, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on Dec. 4, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Edmondson received a total of \$2,132 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Edmondson pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and placed on two years of unsupervised probation. He was fined \$50 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Franklin R. Barclay, of Ohatchee, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on Dec. 4, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Barclay received a total of \$8,798 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Barclay pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended for two years pending restitution, and placed on two years of unsupervised probation. He was fined \$50 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Charlene E. Stone, of Greenville, was tried in Butler County District Court on Nov. 27, 2012. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Stone received a total of \$2,586 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Stone pled guilty and repaid the amount received illegally.

“We at the Alabama Department of Labor 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 Alabama Department of Labor by calling 1-800-392-8019.

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