



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: June 12, 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:

- Joseph Saldana, of Montevallo, was tried in Chilton County District Court on May 12, 2015. An investigation by Labor’s Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Saldana received a total of \$7,867 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Saldana pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail and given two years of unsupervised probation. His sentence will not be suspended until he pays \$500 in restitution. He was also fined \$300 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Kenneth Towns, of Wetumpka, was tried in Elmore County District Court on June 9, 2015. An investigation by Labor’s Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Towns received a total of \$2,105 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Towns pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail, which was suspended, and given two years of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$50 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Freddie Jordan, of Vincent, was tried in Shelby County District Court on May 18, 2015. An investigation by Labor’s Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jordan received a total of \$7,995 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Jordan pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended, and given two years of unsupervised probation. He was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

The following individual was charged with Theft of Property 1st Degree:

- Paul Brady Fore, of Mobile, was tried in Mobile County Circuit Court on December 18, 2014. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Fore received a total of \$8,531 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Fore pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, split for time already served with the remainder suspended for two years pending restitution, and given two years of supervised probation. He was fined \$100, assessed a \$50 victim's fee, and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

The following individuals were charged with Theft of Property 3rd Degree:

- Zenobia Kemp, of Heflin, was tried in Cleburne County Circuit Court on June 4, 2015. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Kemp received a total of \$3,968 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Kemp pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended, and was given two years of supervised probation. She was also fined \$100 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Quinn T. Fletcher, of Harvest, was tried in Madison County Circuit Court on June 4, 2015. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Fletcher received a total of \$2,378 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

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

- Sanford Jackson, of Alpine, was tried in Talladega County Circuit Court on May 12, 2015. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jackson received a total of \$7,258 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Jackson pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended, and was given two years of probation. He was also fined \$250 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Brian R. Smitherman, of Sylacauga, was tried in Talladega County Circuit Court on May 12, 2015. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Smitherman received a total of \$9,245 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Smitherman pled guilty and was sentenced to one year in jail, which was suspended, and was given two years of probation. He was also fined \$250 and 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.