



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

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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:

- Jeffrey R. Mathus, of Warrior, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on June 4, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Mathus received a total of \$2,800 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Mathus pled guilty and was sentenced to 12 months in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and 24 months of unsupervised probation. He was also fined \$100 and ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Bryanta McGhee, of Anniston, was tried in Calhoun County District Court on May 7, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that McGhee received a total of \$4,205 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

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

- Christopher T. Putnam, of Munford, was tried in Talladega County District Court on April 4, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Putnam received a total of \$3,807 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Putnam pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, suspended for two years pending restitution, and given two years of unsupervised probation. He was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Curtis Scott, of Tuscaloosa, was tried in Tuscaloosa County District Court on May 29, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Scott received a total of \$7,606 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Scott pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days hard labor, which was suspended for two years pending the behavior of the defendant. He was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Nicole Jones, of Tuscaloosa, was tried in Tuscaloosa County District Court on May 29, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Jones received a total of \$12,938 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Jones pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days hard labor, which was suspended for two years, pending behavior of the defendant. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Kimberly Nixon, of Tuscaloosa, was tried in Tuscaloosa County District Court on May 29, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Nixon received a total of \$2,082 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Nixon pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days hard labor, which was suspended for two years, pending behavior of the defendant. She was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Phillip Atchison, of Vance, was tried in Tuscaloosa County District Court on June 12, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Atchison received a total of \$4,475 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Atchison pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days hard labor, which was suspended for two years, pending behavior of the defendant. He was also ordered to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Debra Meriweather, of Highland Home, was tried in Crenshaw County District Court on June 13, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Meriweather received a total of \$2,367 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Meriweather pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended. She was also fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Mary S. Hudson, of Enterprise, was tried in Coffee County District Court on June 17, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Hudson received a total of \$2,074 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Hudson pled guilty and was sentenced to 60 days in jail, which was suspended. She was also required to pay restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Marry A. Simpson, of Hayneville, was tried in Lowndes County District Court on June 18, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Simpson received a total of \$4,735 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Simpson pled guilty and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, which was suspended. She was fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Tom Henry Hughley, of LaFayette, was tried in Chambers County District Court on March 21, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Hughley received a total of \$6,015 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Hughley pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in jail, which was suspended for 24 months pending restitution. He was also required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits received illegally.

- Teresa M. Waldrop, of Birmingham, was tried in Jefferson County District Court on June 17, 2013. An investigation by Labor's Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Waldrop received a total of \$5,404 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

Waldrop pled guilty and was sentenced to 12 months in jail, which was suspended pending restitution, and 24 months of unsupervised probation. She was also fined \$100 and required to pay court costs and restitution in the amount of benefits 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.