

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 29, 2009

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TWC Assists U.S. Attorney in Unemployment Benefits Fraud Arrests

Twelve defendants allegedly schemed to defraud program

AUSTIN — Twelve individuals have been arrested on charges of mail fraud and aggravated identity theft involving Unemployment Insurance (UI), the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) announced today.

The arrests are the result of an ongoing investigation into mail fraud and identity theft in the Camp County area. The investigation was the result of work by TWC, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of the Inspector General, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Denise O. Simpson.

A federal indictment was returned by the grand jury, charging multiple defendants with conspiracy to commit mail fraud, mail fraud and aggravated identity theft in a scheme to obtain UI from TWC.

“Unemployment insurance is there for those who lose their jobs through no fault of their own. Prosecuting those who try to cheat the system sends a strong message to others who may attempt the same thing,” said TWC Chairman Tom Pauken.

The following individuals were arrested and appeared before U.S. Magistrate Judge Chad Everingham, III:

- Shanndolyn Genae Morrow, 28, Hughes Springs, TX
- Shankea Lasha Baker-Adams, 24, Longview, TX
- Annie Lucile Grigsby, 46, Leesburg, TX
- Shalonda Roshea Grigsby, 28, Leesburg, TX
- Quaneshia Quina Baker, 28, Daingerfield, TX
- Travis Gerard Williams, 33, Hughes Springs, TX
- Annie Jean Rogers, 29, Pittsburg, TX
- Agatha Loraine Moore, 24, Pittsburg, TX
- Shanealdolyn T. Morrow, 21, Hughes Springs, TX
- Sonya Lavette Harris, 36, Dallas, TX
- Kimila Denese Jones, 37, Dallas, TX
- Shunndolyn Renae Morrow, 22, Prairie View, TX

If convicted, defendants face 20 years in federal prison for conspiracy and mail fraud charges and not less than two years in federal prison for the aggravated identity theft charge.

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TWC's Regulatory Integrity Division is charged with detecting and preventing fraud, waste and abuse. The division enforces all regulatory statutes within the jurisdiction of the agency, including Tax, Workforce, Trade Act, Skills Development, Self-Sufficiency, Child Care and all other programs that TWC administers. Prevention, detection, and elimination of fraud and abuse in the UI program are top priorities, ensuring that funds are available exclusively to those who meet the eligibility requirements.

TWC administers UI benefits to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and are actively seeking work. TWC regularly cross matches UI claims with employer wage reports and other databases to detect possible UI fraud. If TWC discovers that claimants have received UI benefits through fraudulent applications, the agency seeks immediate reimbursement of overpayments. Examples of UI fraud include giving false information and failure to report self-employment or other earnings while receiving UI benefits.

To report suspected UI fraud, call the TWC Fraud and Program Abuse Hotline at (800) 252-3642. For monthly updates on fraud convictions, see TWC's Web site at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/ui/bnfts/prosecutiondispo.html>.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.