

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Virginia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Williamsburg Business Owner Pleads Guilty to Money Laundering and Conspiracy Involving Labor Trafficking

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – A Midlothian man pleaded guilty today to conspiring to defraud and commit offenses against the United States, including human trafficking of individuals from Central America, benefiting from forced labor, money laundering, and harboring undocumented non-citizens.

According to court documents, George William Evans, 68, was the fifty-percent owner of a commercial laundry business, Northstar Holdings of Virginia LLC d/b/a Magnolia Cleaning Services, LLC. Evans participated in a conspiracy to harbor, transport, and benefit from the employment of undocumented noncitizens at the commercial laundry business he co-owned. Between the first quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2022, the business's wage records reflect approximately 121 employees with alleged invalid or mismatched Social Security Numbers and wage payments of more than \$1.2 million to these employees.

At the direction of Evans and his coconspirators, Magnolia Cleaning Services exploited undocumented noncitizens to work long hours in poor working conditions. In some cases, employees were threatened with deportation, physical harm, and harm to their families if they refused to work as directed. Some undocumented employees lived in the laundry facility without access to a kitchen or bathroom with a shower or bathtub. One employee was a child who was made to work night shifts while attending school during the day.

Evans pleaded guilty to conspiring to defraud and commit offenses against the United States and engaging in a transaction in criminally derived property. Evans agreed to forfeit an amount not less than \$3,938,630 to the United States - of which he agreed to pay \$1,969,315 no later than thirty days before sentencing. He is scheduled to be sentenced on June 20. He faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison for the conspiracy offense and ten years in prison for the money laundering offense. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after taking into account the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Jessica D. Aber, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Derek W. Gordon, Acting Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Washington, D.C.; Troy Springer, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Washington, DC Regional Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and Damon E. Wood, Inspector in Charge of the Washington Division of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, made the announcement after U.S. District Judge Elizabeth Wilson Hanes accepted the plea.

This investigation was conducted by the Hampton Roads Human Trafficking Task Force, a collaboration between federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors, as well as non-governmental organizations, working together to combat human trafficking in the Hampton Roads Region.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brian J. Samuels and D. Mack Coleman are prosecuting the case.

A copy of this press release is located on the website of the [U.S. Attorney's Office](#) for the Eastern District of Virginia. Related court documents and information are located on the website of the [District Court](#) for the Eastern District of Virginia or on [PACER](#) by searching for Case No. 4:22-cr-92.

Topic(s):

Labor & Employment
Human Trafficking
Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - Virginia, Eastern](#)

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