

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Chester Woman Sentenced For Filing Fraudulent Claims In Pandemic Fraud Scheme**

Friday, December 19, 2025

**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Pennsylvania

HARRISBURG - The United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced that Muneerah Abdullah, age 46, of Chester, Pennsylvania, was sentenced on December 17, 2025, by United States District Judge Keli M. Neary to nine months of house arrest as part of a two-year probationary sentence. Judge Neary also ordered Abdullah to pay \$59,823 in restitution.

According to United States Attorney Brian D. Miller, from in or about April 2020 to in or about October 2020, Abdullah filed fraudulent claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claims for herself and other ineligible recipients, to include inmates. The PUA claims contained fraudulent answers to questions concerning the claimant's eligibility to receive the assistance. Abdullah herself was not eligible to receive the assistance as she had no legitimate employment prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The incarcerated individuals were not eligible due to their inmate status. Over the course of the scheme, Abdullah profited approximately \$59,823 as a result of her fraudulent acts. The total loss to the Department of Labor was \$117,585.

"Muneerah Abudallah defrauded the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry by submitting fraudulent pandemic unemployment assistance claims for herself and others, including inmates, who were not entitled to such benefits. Today's sentencing affirms the Office of Inspector General's commitment to working with our law enforcement partners to hold accountable those who attempt to exploit vital U.S. Department of Labor programs," said Syreeta Scott, Special Agent-in-Charge, Mid-Atlantic Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorney Alisan V. Martin prosecuted the case.

On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) was signed into law. The CARES Act created the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

(PUA) program, which provides unemployment benefits to individuals not eligible for regular unemployment compensation or extended unemployment benefits, including individuals, families, and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligibility to receive weekly PUA benefits was predicated on the applicant's unemployment for reasons related to the pandemic; however, the applicant must also have been able to work each day and, if offered a job, the applicant must have been able to accept it. Once the applicant was approved to receive benefits, the applicant was required to submit weekly certifications that indicated that he or she: was ready, willing and able to work each day; was seeking full time employment; did not refuse any job offers or referrals; and, had reported any employment during the week and the gross pay or other payments received.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

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