

PRESS RELEASE

“F.R.A.U.D. is dope” podcaster sentenced to federal prison again

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U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

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ATLANTA – Multi-convicted fraudster Jonathan Dupiton has been sentenced to seven years in federal prison for using stolen identities to obtain millions of dollars in unemployment insurance benefits.

“During the pandemic, while citizens were struggling with job loss and trying to make ends meet, Dupiton stole unemployment benefits by submitting false applications using hundreds of stolen identities,” said U.S. Attorney Theodore S. Hertzberg. “His sentence underscores that anyone who seeks to exploit taxpayer-funded programs will be aggressively prosecuted and face substantial prison time.”

“Jonathan Dupiton orchestrated a brazen scheme to steal millions in unemployment benefits using the stolen identities of innocent victims, all while already serving a sentence for fraud,” said Marlo Graham, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Atlanta. “At a time when Americans were facing unprecedented financial hardship, he chose to exploit a critical safety net for personal gain. The FBI remains committed to identifying and holding accountable those who abuse public assistance programs and undermine trust in systems designed to help those in need.”

“Jonathan Dupiton stole identities and filed hundreds of fraudulent claims to steal nearly \$3 million in unemployment benefits meant for struggling Americans, said Anthony P. D’Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor. His sentencing sends a strong message: if you exploit federal programs and steal from taxpayers, my office will relentlessly pursue you. We work hand-in-hand with our law enforcement partners and have zero tolerance for fraud. We will find you, and we will hold you accountable.”

“Dupiton’s fraud stole critical unemployment benefits from Americans who needed them most,” said Assistant Special Agent in Charge Maisha Horton, IRS Criminal

Investigation, Atlanta Field Office. "IRS CI special agents remain vigilant in protecting taxpayer dollars and will continue to hold accountable those who exploit public programs for personal gain."

According to U.S. Attorney Hertzberg, the charges, and other information presented in court: In 2020, while completing a federal sentence at a halfway house for a previous fraud conviction that targeted the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Jonathan Dupiton, a podcaster, organized a multi-million dollar fraud scheme that targeted California's Unemployment Insurance ("UI") benefits program. The scheme began at least by July 2020 and continued into early 2021.

The UI program was a joint state and federal program that provided temporary financial assistance to lawful workers who were unemployed through no fault of their own. Beginning in or about March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, several federal programs expanded UI eligibility and increased UI benefits, including the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program, Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation, and the Lost Wages Assistance Program. In California, the Employment Development Department ("CA-EDD"), based in Sacramento, California, administered the UI program.

Dupiton, whose motto was "F.R.A.U.D. is Dope" (acronym for "Finally Rich After Unstoppable Determination"), obtained stolen identities of hundreds of unwitting individuals. He and his conspirators used this information to electronically submit false and fraudulent UI applications to the CA-EDD via the internet, using a virtual private network ("VPN"). The VPN helped encrypt data and masked the actual originating Internet Protocol address, thereby concealing the computer used to submit the fraudulent UI applications and delaying detection by law enforcement.

After UI claims were approved, Dupiton and his conspirators updated the claimants' information to add mailing addresses in the Northern District of Georgia, including Dupiton's own address, for the delivery of debit cards containing the UI benefits. After the debit cards were received, Dupiton and others went to ATMs, mostly located in the metro-Atlanta area, and withdrew the fraudulently obtained funds. In total, the CA-EDD was duped into electronically transferring approximately \$3,800,000 in UI benefits. Dupiton and his conspirators subsequently withdrew or otherwise spent more than \$2 million of the fraudulently obtained funds.

On April 14, 2026, U.S. District Judge Victoria M. Calvert sentenced Jonathan Dupiton, 36, of Atlanta, Georgia, to seven years in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release. Dupiton will be ordered to pay restitution in an amount to be

determined at a future hearing. Dupiton pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Mail and Wire Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft on January 13, 2026.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigations; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Tracia M. King prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

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