

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Former State Labor Department Employee Charged with Accepting Bribes to Approve More Than \$500,000 in Fraudulent Unemployment Compensation Claims**

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

**For Immediate Release**

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

ERIE, Pa. - A resident of Erie, Pennsylvania, has been indicted by a federal grand jury in Erie on charges of wire fraud and theft of government property, United States Attorney Troy Rivetti announced today.

The five-count Indictment named Elizabeth Goss, 43, as the sole defendant.

According to the Indictment, from in and around June 2020, to in and around February 2023, Goss, while working at the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, accepted unauthorized payments from unemployment compensation claimants to approve and expedite Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and other pandemic-related unemployment claims even though the claimants were not entitled to those benefits. The Indictment alleges that Goss's actions resulted in the payment of approximately \$528,449 in unemployment compensation benefits to which claimants were not entitled.

"This investigation and the resulting Indictment send a clear message that government employees who steal and misuse public funds will be brought to justice," said United States Attorney Rivetti. "Our office and our law enforcement partners are committed to rooting out fraud and safeguarding the public treasury."

"At the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, we are relentless in protecting the integrity of unemployment insurance programs," said Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. "Together with our law enforcement partners, we are going on offense against fraud—

tracking down those who exploit these benefits and holding them accountable. Fraud will not be tolerated. If you try to game the system, we will find you.”

“Postal Inspectors remain steadfast in pursuing individuals who misuse the mail to defraud government programs intended to support the American public in times of need,” said Acting Inspector in Charge of the United States Postal Inspection Service, Pittsburgh Division, Dave Cunningham. “We are grateful for the continued partnership and coordinated efforts of our law enforcement and prosecutorial colleagues, whose dedication was instrumental throughout this investigation.”

The law provides for a maximum sentence of up to 20 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both at each of Counts One through Four (wire fraud) and a sentence of up to 10 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both at Count Five (theft of government property). Under the federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed would be based upon the seriousness of the offenses and the prior criminal history, if any, of the defendant.

Assistant United States Attorney Christian A. Trabold is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

The Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, United States Postal Inspection Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry conducted the investigation leading to the Indictment.

On April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. The core mission of the Fraud Division is to zealously investigate and prosecute those who steal or fraudulently misuse taxpayer dollars. Department of Justice efforts to combat fraud support President Trump’s Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

An indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

*Updated April 21, 2026*