

# Prince George's County Man Sentenced for Unemployment Insurance Fraud and Firearms, Drug Trafficking Crimes

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

## For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Maryland

**Greenbelt, Maryland** – District Judge Deborah L. Boardman sentenced Ahmed Hussain, 23, of Prince George's County, Maryland, to 102 months in federal prison, followed by three years of supervised release. Judge Boardman also ordered Hussain to pay \$557,078 in restitution. The sentence is in connection with Hussain's convictions on conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft charges, stemming from Hussain submitting fraudulent CARES Act unemployment insurance (UI) claims. Hussain's sentence also covers Hussain's convictions on felon in possession of a firearm and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance charges.

Kelly O. Hayes, U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced the sentence with Special Agent in Charge Troy W. Springer, National Capital Region, U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG); Special Agent in Charge Charles Doerrer, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); Special Agent in Charge William J. DelBagno, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) – Baltimore Field Office; and Chief George Nader, Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD).

According to the plea agreement, beginning in 2021, and continuing until at least about September 2022, Hussain and his co-conspirators engaged in a scheme to defraud the United States, the State of Maryland, multiple financial institutions, and multiple individuals, including identity theft victims. The co-conspirators submitted false and fraudulent UI benefits claims to the Maryland Department of Labor (MD-DOL), Maryland's agency that is responsible for processing the claims. As part of the conspiracy, the defendants fraudulently obtained more than \$3.5 million in unemployment insurance benefits. Hussain personally participated in UI claims resulting in losses exceeding \$550,000. He used debit cards issued in the names of aggravated identity theft victims to obtain UI fraud funds.

Company 1, which provided professional support services to the MD-DOL to review UI claims and administer UI benefits, employed co-conspirators Bryan Nushawn Ruffin, 27, of Woodbridge, Virginia, and Kiara Smith, 28, of Fort Washington, Maryland. As detailed in the plea agreement, Hussain and his co-conspirators possessed and used computers that Company 1 issued to Ruffin and Smith to access non-public UI data and databases

maintained by the MD-DOL. Ruffin and Smith then granted Hussain and his co-conspirators access to MD-DOL databases which they used to change information on existing UI claims.

This included the contact email address, online account password, and payment method for existing UI claims. The co-conspirators furthered the scheme by using the identity theft victims' personal identifying information (PII). They also used their access to the MD-DOL databases to upload and approve documents submitted in support of fraudulent UI claims, remove fraud holds on UI claims, certify weeks for determining UI benefits, and engage in other actions to facilitate the fraudulent UI benefits payments. During the scheme, the MD-DOL believed they were disbursing UI benefits to debit cards/accounts of UI applicants, but the accounts were actually opened and controlled by Hussain and his co-conspirators.

Hussain also admitted that on November 16, 2022, while law enforcement executed a residential search warrant at his home, they found that he knowingly possessed a stolen black Honor Defense 9mm handgun. He possessed the firearm in relation to his drug-trafficking activities. Officers also found 60 pounds of marijuana, drug distribution baggies, and 229 rounds of ammunition of varying calibers in Hussain's room. Prior to law enforcement finding him in possession of the firearm and ammunition, Hussain had been convicted — and knew he had been convicted — of an offense punishable by more than one year imprisonment. Therefore, Hussain was prohibited from possessing a firearm or ammunition.

Co-Defendants Ruffin, Smith, and Zakria Hussain, 28, of Oxon Hill, Maryland, aka "Oso," and Lawrence Nathaniel Harris, 32, of Temple Hills, Maryland, aka "Manman" and "Biggbank," already pled guilty and are awaiting sentencing.

The District of Maryland COVID-19 Strike Force is one of five strike forces established throughout the United States by the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute COVID-19 fraud, including fraud relating to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The CARES Act was designed to provide emergency financial assistance to Americans suffering the economic effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The strike forces focus on large-scale, multi-state pandemic relief fraud perpetrated by criminal organizations and transnational actors. The strike forces are interagency law enforcement efforts, using prosecutor-led and data analyst-driven teams designed to identify and bring to justice those who stole pandemic relief funds.

For more information about the Department's response to the pandemic, visit [justice.gov/coronavirus](https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus). 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 (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at [justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form](https://justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form).

U.S. Attorney Hayes commended the DOL-OIG, ATF, FBI, and PGPD, for their work in the investigation and the MD-DOL for its assistance. Ms. Hayes thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Harry M. Gruber, Paul A. Riley, Joseph L. Wenner, Christopher Sarma, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Lanay Mitchell who are prosecuting this case. She also recognized the Maryland COVID-19 Strike Force and Paralegal Specialist Joanna B.N. Huber for their valuable assistance.

For more information about the Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office, its priorities, and resources available to report fraud, visit [justice.gov/usao-md](https://justice.gov/usao-md) and [justice.gov/usao-md/community-outreach](https://justice.gov/usao-md/community-outreach).

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