

PRESS RELEASE

Puerto Rico Department of Labor Employee and Seven Others Indicted in Public Corruption Unemployment Insurance Fraud Scheme

Friday, December 19, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, P.R. – On December 17, 2025, a Federal Grand Jury in the District of Puerto Rico returned an indictment charging eight women with engaging in fraud scheme to obtain unemployment compensation from the Puerto Rico Department of Labor (PRDOL) totaling \$619,923 and to make kickback payments to a public official, announced W. Stephen Muldrow, United States Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico. The United States Department of Labor Office of Inspector General (USDOL-OIG) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are in charge of the investigation with the assistance of the Puerto Rico Police, the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (DHS-OIG), and the Puerto Rico Department of Treasury (Hacienda). The Puerto Rico Department of Labor initiated the referral to federal authorities.

According to the indictment, the defendants conspired to submit false information in order to fraudulently obtain unemployment compensation from the PRDOL. This was done by using false personal identifying information, using identifying information of other individuals, and providing false information related to past employment history. Defendant Luz Garay-Osorio, using her position as an employee of PRDOL, made changes in the PRDOL system to make family members eligible to receive unemployment benefits, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, and Disaster Unemployment Assistance. Garay-Osorio also used her position as a PRDOL interviewer to file fraudulent claims, create false work history, change historical changes, and make monetary and non-monetary determinations. In addition, Garay-Osorio submitted fraudulent claims using other individuals' identities and caused benefits to be paid to co-conspirators, including family members.

The defendants fraudulently obtained approximately \$619,923 in benefits and Garay-Osorio received approximately \$142,507 in kickback payments as follows.

[1] Luz Garay-Osorio directly received approximately \$13,308 in fraudulent benefits.

[2] Glenda Garay-Osorio received approximately \$107,291 in fraudulent benefits and transferred approximately \$17,857.00 to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

[3] Tatiana Skerrett-Garay received approximately \$46,834 in fraudulent benefits and transferred approximately \$20,597.98 to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

[4] Ariana Skerrett-Garay received approximately \$45,946 in fraudulent benefits and transferred the entire amount to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

[5] Dayanara Aquino-Garay received approximately \$73,950 in fraudulent benefits and transferred approximately \$10,575.00 to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

[6] Nashaly Vega-Garay received approximately \$102,670 in fraudulent benefits and transferred approximately \$21,423.00 to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

[7] Almarys De Jesús-Garay received approximately \$13,803 in fraudulent benefits and transferred approximately \$1,000.00 to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

[8] Mariela Cabrera-Vistel received approximately \$58,015 in fraudulent benefits and caused the purchase of 18 money orders totaling \$17,500 that were deposited in the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio and an additional approximately \$7,609 was transferred to the bank account of Luz Garay-Osorio.

In addition to being charged with conspiracy to steal federal funds and honest services mail fraud, Garay-Osorio is also charged with money laundering and aggravated identity theft. Garay-Osorio was subsequently terminated by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor.

"These defendants engaged in a scheme to defraud the Puerto Rico Department of Labor by using an employee's position of trust to file numerous fraudulent unemployment insurance claims when they were not entitled to such benefits," said U.S. Attorney Muldrow. "The United States Department of Justice, along with our state and federal counterparts will continue to hold accountable those who seek to exploit federal benefits for personal gain, to protect vulnerable populations, and to safeguard the integrity of taxpayer-funded programs. We commend the outstanding work and collaboration of our law enforcement partners in the investigation of this case."

"An important part of the mission of the Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of fraud involving the U.S. Department of Labor's unemployment insurance

program. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate these types of allegations,” stated Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent-in-Charge, Northeast Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

“This investigation underscores our commitment to protecting public funds and holding accountable those who abuse positions of trust for personal gain,” said Joe Rodríguez, Acting Special Agent in Charge for the FBI’s San Juan Field Office. “The FBI will continue working closely with our law enforcement partners to identify, investigate, and prosecute fraudulent schemes that undermine critical assistance programs and hurt our communities.”

“The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is committed to working with our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners to investigate and bring to justice those who defraud the American taxpayer and fraudulently use the nation’s mail system,” said Bladismir Rojo, Postal Inspector in Charge, Miami Division.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Anderson is in charge of the prosecution of the case. If convicted, the defendants are facing up to 5 years of imprisonment for theft of government money and conspiracy. Luz Garay-Osorio is also facing up to 20 years of imprisonment for honest services mail fraud and a mandatory two-year sentence in prison for aggravated identity theft. In addition, Luz Garay Osorio and Mariela Cabrera Vistel are facing up to 20 years in prison for money laundering conspiracy. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Luz Garay-Osorio is the ninth Commonwealth of Puerto Rico employee to be charged or plead guilty to a federal corruption offense since 2024. *See United States v. Antonio Silva-Rodriguez* (Hacienda employee – CR 23-452(CVR)); *United States v. Hector Vazquez-Barroso* (Hacienda employee – CR 23-452(CVR)); *United States v. Doris Bonilla-Valle* (Hacienda employee – CR 23-452(CVR)); *United States v. Nancy Baez-Flores* (CESCO employee – CR 24-238(PAD)); *United States v. Joselyn Figueroa-Rosario* (CESCO employee – CR 24-238(PAD)); *United States v. Javier Relta-Lebron* (Hacienda employee – CR 25-434(PAD)); *United States v. Harry Muriel-Falero* (Hacienda employee – CR 25-434(PAD)); *United States v. Elsa Santiago-Colon* (Hacienda employee – CR 25-492(SCC)).

To report a COVID-19-related fraud scheme or suspicious activity, contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) by calling the NCDF Hotline at 1-866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>

To report a bribery/kickback scheme or suspicious public corruption activity, contact the FBI by calling the San Juan Field Office at (787)987-6500 or online via www.tips.fbi.gov

Indictments contain only charges and are not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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