

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Seaside Woman Sentenced to Federal Prison for Stealing COVID-19 Unemployment Benefits**

Thursday, April 16, 2026

**For Immediate Release**

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

PORTLAND, Ore.—A Seaside, Oregon, woman was sentenced to federal prison yesterday for submitting fraudulent pandemic unemployment applications, falsely claiming over two dozen employees, and causing the government to pay her over half a million dollars in benefits.

Tamara Fulmer, 48, was sentenced to 28 months in federal prison and three years of supervised release. She was also ordered to pay \$581,283 in restitution.

"Fraudsters who steal benefits are not just stealing from the government – they are depriving other Oregonians who depend on those benefits to live," said Scott E. Bradford, U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon. "Our office will continue to prioritize and prosecute theft of government funds."

"This case sends a clear message: those who attempt to defraud government programs will be held accountable. Tamara Fulmer stole nearly \$600,000 from the unemployment insurance program at a time when Americans needed those funds most. The Office of Inspector General, together with local U.S. Attorneys' Offices, the U.S. Department of Justice's newly established National Fraud Enforcement Division, and our law enforcement partners, will continue to aggressively pursue individuals who seek to exploit government benefit programs. No fraud is too large or too small," said Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

According to court documents, between May 2020 and October 2021, Fulmer used the personal information of 27 individuals she claimed to be her employees to fraudulently apply for pandemic unemployment insurance benefits (UI benefits).

Based on Fulmer's misrepresentations, the Oregon Employment Department (OED) paid out more than \$567,000 in UI benefits. Fulmer deposited at least 236 UI checks totaling nearly \$69,000 into her own personal account and cashed many of the UI checks at a gas station in Seaside without the applicants' knowledge or permission.

OED paid Fulmer an additional \$13,353 after she submitted her own fraudulent UI application where she falsely claimed she had not applied for or received disability benefits, despite receiving disability payments since 2004.

On February 19, 2025, a federal grand jury in Portland returned a one-count indictment charging Fulmer with theft of government property. On November 4, 2025, Fulmer pleaded guilty.

U.S. Attorney Scott E. Bradford for the District of Oregon made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, and the Social Security Administration Office of Inspector General. It was prosecuted by Meredith D.M. Bateman and Ethan G. Bodell, Assistant U.S. Attorneys for the District of Oregon.

On April 7, 2026, 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.

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

*Updated April 16, 2026*