

PRESS RELEASE

Ten Individuals Charged with \$9 Million Federal Loan Fraud and Money Laundering

Friday, August 15, 2025

For Immediate Release

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

ATLANTA – Ten individuals face federal charges stemming from a fraud and money laundering operation that targeted government loan programs offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration, including the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and Paycheck Protection Program. In addition, two of the defendants were charged with laundering the proceeds of a fraudulent unemployment insurance scheme.

“Fraud schemes, like the ones perpetrated by these defendants, stole valuable resources meant to assist small businesses and citizens during difficult times,” said United States Attorney Theodore S. Hertzberg. “The U.S. Attorney’s Office is committed to prosecuting and punishing cold-hearted criminals who target government aid programs for their personal gain.”

“PPP loans were intended to provide critical relief to small businesses,” said FBI Atlanta Special Agent in Charge Paul Brown. “FBI Atlanta and our law enforcement partners will continue to aggressively pursue anyone who exploited the pandemic as a means to enrich themselves.”

“An important mission of the Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of unemployment insurance fraud targeting state workforce agencies. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate these types of allegations,” stated Mathew Broadhurst, Special Agent-in-Charge, Southeast Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

According to U.S. Attorney Hertzberg, the indictment, and other information presented in court: Between November 2020 and June 2023, David Nathaniel Black, Jr. and others used real companies’ information to submit unauthorized and false Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) applications. The loan

applications allegedly included false information about the companies, such as the number of employees, the need for the loan, the intended use of the funds, average monthly payroll, and gross revenue. The applications were supported by fraudulent documents, including false tax records, bank statements, and payroll. In addition, the defendants used stolen identification information belonging to the owners or officers of the companies to submit the applications without their knowledge. In total, the defendants allegedly obtained over \$9 million in fraudulent loans.

After the loans were obtained, the defendants allegedly conducted cash withdrawals and transferred funds, sometimes using the funds to purchase luxury items. For example, Black used fraud proceeds for the following expenditures:

- \$200,000 for a 2022 Bentley Bentayga;
- \$350,000 for a 2020 McLaren 720S convertible;
- \$142,680 for the down payment of a 2023 Mercedes Benz G-Class Wagon; and
- \$180,645 to pay the annual rent for a luxury home.

David Nathaniel Black, Jr., 31, of Newnan, Georgia, was charged with 17 counts of wire fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment per count, and 17 counts of aggravated identity theft, which carries a mandatory, consecutive term of imprisonment of two years per count. Black was also charged with over 100 counts of money laundering, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment per count.

In addition to Black, the following individuals were charged with multiple counts of money laundering:

- Rashad Avery, 36, of Atlanta, Georgia;
- Tara Batson, 31, of Atlanta, Georgia;
- Chris Elvins Constant, 25, of Ft. Pierce, Florida;
- Nicole Cooley, 35, of Baltimore, Maryland;
- Reginald Douglas, 32, of Atlanta, Georgia;
- Yvenord Guerilus, 24, of Miami, Florida;
- Carson Merice, 25, of Miami, Florida;
- Rise Robinson, 36, of Atlanta, Georgia; and
- George Thompson, 33, of Atlanta, Georgia.

Black and Constant are also charged with money laundering conspiracy, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment, for allegedly laundering proceeds from a fraudulent unemployment insurance scheme.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendants are presumed innocent of the charges, and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendants' guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

Assistant United States Attorneys Kelly K. Connors and Sarah E. Klapman are prosecuting the case.

Nine of the defendants appeared in federal court this week following their arrests. If you know Rise Robinson's whereabouts or have information that may lead to her arrest, please contact the FBI at tips.fbi.gov or 800-CALL-FBI.

On May 17, 2021, the Department of Justice established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the Department's resources in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <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: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6185. 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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