

PRESS RELEASE

Two Sentenced In Connection With Fraud Ring That Stole Millions In Government Funds, Thousands of Identities

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

For Immediate Release

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

USACO.PublicAffairs@usdoj.gov

DENVER – The United States Attorney for the District of Colorado announces that Ikponmwosa Erhinmwinirose, 39, of Atlanta, Georgia, and Nyerhovwo Presley Agbure, 34, of Atlanta, Georgia, each sentenced in connection to a fraud ring that stole millions in government funds and victimized thousands of people nationwide. Erhinmwinirose will spend 17 years in federal prison after a federal jury in Denver convicted him on six counts of wire fraud, three counts of aggravated identity theft, one count of wire fraud conspiracy, and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering. Agbure will spend 57 months in federal prison after pleading guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering. Two other codefendants await sentencing.

According to the evidence presented at the trial and sentencing of Erhinmwinirose, he and other conspirators including Agbure, applied for more than \$90 million in government benefits and stole more than \$7.6 million in government benefits from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, multiple state unemployment insurance programs including from the state of Colorado, and tax refunds. The PPP and EIDL are economic relief programs launched by the federal government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To obtain these benefits, Erhinmwinirose, Agbure, and other conspirators in the fraud ring used the stolen identities of more than 1,000 victims. As a result of Erhinmwinirose and Agbure's actions, identity-theft victims never received IRS stimulus payments, received letters in the mail stating that they had to start repaying loans that were taken out in their names, and faced backlash on social media because others thought they had taken out large loans that in fact went to Erhinmwinirose, Agbure, and other members of his fraud ring. To facilitate the criminal activity, the defendants created dozens of email accounts under false names to impersonate real individuals and businesses, worked with conspirators to submit fraudulent applications for benefits, and then instructed a

network of conspirators to launder the proceeds through multiple bank accounts before converting the money to cash or transferring it overseas.

“Driven by greed and selfishness, these criminals ran an aggressive fraud scheme which stole millions of dollars from American taxpayers and victimized more than a thousand innocent people,” said United States Attorney for the District of Colorado Peter McNeilly. “The United States Attorney’s Office in the District of Colorado in partnership with the National Fraud Enforcement Division will continue to vigorously seek out and prosecute those who defraud and victimize American taxpayers.”

United States District Judge Charlotte N. Sweeney presided over the sentencing.

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, FDIC Office of Inspector General, Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Inspector General, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General handled the investigation.

Assistant United States Attorneys Craig Fansler and Sonia Dave handled the prosecution.

The core mission of the National Fraud Enforcement Division is to zealously investigate and prosecute those who steal or fraudulently misuse taxpayer dollars. The National Fraud Enforcement Division will fulfill that mission by coordinating with agencies responsible for administering benefit programs; partnering with federal, tribal, state, territorial, and local law enforcement on fraud-fighting efforts; developing systems and processes that ensure efficient identification of fraud against taxpayer dollars; and equipping prosecutors and law enforcement with state-of-the-art tools and resources needed to bring criminal actors to justice. The attorneys in the National Fraud Enforcement Division will work every day to protect the financial integrity of our government and the tax system that supports it.

Department of Justice [efforts](#) 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 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>

Case Number: 1-23-cr-00300-CNS

Contact

USACO.PublicAffairs@usdoj.gov

Updated April 8, 2026