

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Former Department of Labor Employee Pleads Guilty to Fraudulently Obtaining Over \$40,000 in Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Benefits**

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

**For Immediate Release**

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

BOSTON – A former employee of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) pleaded guilty in federal court in Boston to fraudulently obtaining over \$40,000 in pandemic unemployment assistance (PUA) benefits.

Mo Yuong Kang, 50, formerly of Woburn and Dracut, Mass., pleaded guilty to four counts of wire fraud. U.S. District Court Judge Brian E. Murphy scheduled sentencing for Aug. 11, 2026. [In August 2025](#), Kang was indicted by a federal grand jury.

Kang worked as an Industrial Hygienist with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, an agency of the DOL, from June 2016 until July 2023. In 2020 and 2021, Kang was a full-time employee of the DOL and earned over \$85,000 annually.

In April 2020, Kang submitted a false PUA application to the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA). In the application, Kang claimed under the penalty of perjury that he was "self-employed, an independent contractor, or a gig worker and COVID-19 has severely limited [his] ability to perform [his] normal work," and that he had not earned more than \$89 a week since March 8, 2020. The DUA approved Kang's claim, and through September 2021 Kang subsequently submitted weekly certifications to the DUA claiming that he did not work and did not receive any income during those weekly periods. Based upon his application and weekly certifications, Kang received \$45,868 in PUA benefits to which he was not entitled.

The charge of wire fraud provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district

court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

United States Attorney Leah B. Foley; Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and Christopher Silvestro, Special Agent in Charge of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Northeast Field Office made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristina E. Barclay of the Public Corruption and Special Prosecutions Unit is prosecuting the case.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was enacted in March 2020 and designed to provide emergency financial assistance to the millions of Americans who were suffering the economic effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CARES Act created a new temporary federal unemployment insurance program called pandemic unemployment assistance (PUA), which provided unemployment benefits for individuals who were not eligible for standard unemployment benefits. To receive PUA benefits, Massachusetts claimants were required to certify in an initial registration and in weekly certifications whether or not they worked or received any income during the relevant time period. The PUA program was administered in Massachusetts by the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

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