

# Hampton Man Pleads Guilty to Multiple Fraud Schemes Totaling Over \$2 Million and Will Forfeit More Than \$800,000 to the United States Government

Thursday, February 15, 2024

## For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Hampshire

CONCORD – A Hampton man pleaded guilty today in federal court to four separate fraud schemes involving a total intended loss of approximately \$2.1 million, U.S. Attorney Jane E. Young announces.

Anthony Silva, 39, pleaded guilty to three counts of wire fraud, one count of mail fraud, and one count of aggravated identity theft. As part of the plea agreement, Silva will forfeit assets totaling over \$825,000 to the United States government. U.S. District Court Judge Samantha D. Elliott scheduled sentencing for May 2, 2024. The grand jury returned an initial indictment against the defendant on March 21, 2022, and a superseding indictment on December 20, 2023.

Silva orchestrated four separate fraud schemes using stolen identities. Specifically, Silva used stolen names, dates of birth, Social Security Numbers, and other identifiers to fraudulently obtain (1) unemployment insurance benefits from Vermont, (2) unemployment insurance benefits from Massachusetts, (3) American Express credit cards, and (4) CARES Act funds. The fraudulently obtained unemployment benefits and CARES Act funds were deposited either by check or direct deposit into dozens of accounts Silva controlled at multiple banks. Many of these accounts were in the names of individual victims or fictional organizations, with Silva listed as the trustee. Silva obtained more than \$400,000 from Vermont, over \$150,000 from Massachusetts, and \$600,000 from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The fraudulently-obtained credit cards were used to make over \$50,000 in purchases from retailers such as Victoria's

Secret and Walmart. Silva also tried unsuccessfully to obtain \$1.35 million in CARES Act funding. [The total intended loss was approximately \\$2.1 million.](#)

The charge of wire fraud and mail fraud provides for a sentence of up to 20 years in prison and a fine of either \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss, whichever is higher. The charge of aggravated identity theft provides for a mandatory sentence of 2 years to be served consecutive to any other sentence imposed. 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.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General, and the United States Secret Service led the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alexander S. Chen and John J. Kennedy are prosecuting the case.

[During the early part of the coronavirus pandemic, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act. The CARES Act included multiple relief provisions to help the millions of Americans and many small businesses adversely affected by the pandemic, including the Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\). Private lenders could participate in the PPP. The loans, which were supposed to be used for payroll, were fully guaranteed by the government. If borrowers used the PPP loans for payroll and other approved expenses as intended, they could apply for loan forgiveness. The CARES Act also opened up the Small Business Administration's \(SBA\) Economic Injury Disaster Loan \(EIDL\) program. As with PPP loans, EIDL loans were supposed to be used for payroll and other business expenses such as rent and mortgage.](#)

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>.

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