

PRESS RELEASE

Nigerian National Charged with Theft of Pandemic Unemployment Benefits

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Pennsylvania

PITTSBURGH, Pa. – A Nigerian national residing in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has been indicted by a federal grand jury in Pittsburgh on charges of theft of government property, Acting United States Attorney Troy Rivetti announced today.

The one-count Indictment named Funke Iyanda, 43, with no U.S. status, as the sole defendant.

According to the Indictment, from May 27, 2020, to May 24, 2021, Iyanda prepared and submitted a false application and claim for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits in the name of another person to the PA Department of Labor, for which Iyanda received approximately \$40,980 in unemployment benefits to which Iyanda was not legally entitled.

The law provides for a maximum total sentence of up to 10 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both. Under the federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed would be based upon the seriousness of the offense and the prior criminal history, if any, of the defendant.

Assistant United States Attorney Gregory C. Melucci is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

The U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General and Department of Homeland Security conducted the investigation leading to the Indictment.

An indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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