

**Department of Justice**  
**U.S. Attorney's Office**  
**District of Kansas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 11, 2017

## **Olathe Woman Sentenced In Identity Theft Scheme**

**KANSAS CITY, KAN.** - An Olathe woman was sentenced Tuesday for a scheme to collect income tax refunds by creating companies that existed only on paper, U.S. Attorney Tom Beall said. In addition, a co-defendant in the case pleaded guilty Tuesday.

**Raquel Odegbaro**, 44, Olathe, Kan., was sentenced Tuesday to 75 months in federal prison and ordered to pay more than \$894,000 in restitution. She had pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to defraud the government, one count of aggravated identity theft and one count of mail fraud.

Co-defendant **Abdirizak Aden**, 33, Kansas City, Mo., pleaded guilty Tuesday to one count of conspiracy to defraud the government and one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud.

In their pleas, Odegbaro and Aden said they operated Cokeza Styles, an online business that sold hair products. They admitted creating a series of fictitious companies and filing tax returns in the names of so-called employees by providing false information about wages earned, amounts withheld and refunds due. The false tax returns directed the Internal Revenue Service to deposit refunds electronically to reloadable credit cards controlled by the conspirators. The individuals whose names appeared on the refunds never actually worked for the fictitious companies.

In addition, the conspirators used stolen Social Security numbers to apply for unemployment benefits from the Kansas Department of Labor. They created more than nine fictitious companies and registered them with the labor department. They filed false claims in the names of employees who purportedly were terminated without fault.

Aden is set for sentencing Oct. 2. The parties have agreed to recommend a sentence of 18 months and restitution of approximately \$541,000.

Co-defendants include **Alexander Limihagati**, 35, Overland Park, Kan., who is set for sentencing Aug. 14, and **Zia Mkubi Kajanja**, 42, Overland Park, Kan., who is awaiting trial.

Beall commended the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation; the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Labor and Racketeering and Fraud; the

Kansas Department of Children and Families; the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Department of Education – Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Office of Inspector General; the Kansas Department of Labor; and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jabari Wamble for their work on the case.

In all cases, defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The indictments merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.