



Department of Justice

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Eastern District of Virginia

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Richmond Man Sentenced for Successive COVID Fraud and Bank Fraud Schemes

RICHMOND, Va. – A Richmond man was sentenced yesterday to seven years in prison for orchestrating successive schemes to defraud a COVID-19 relief program and steal funds through altered checks.

According to court documents, Davon Hunter, 26, used Instagram and word of mouth to recruit potential co-conspirators to provide their personal identifying information so that Hunter could submit fraudulent applications to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a COVID-19 relief program that was intended to provide loans backed by the Small Business Administration to certain businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other entities to help them retain their employees or stay afloat during the pandemic. Hunter submitted at least 23 fraudulent PPP loan applications to at least four financial institutions for fictitious businesses purportedly belonging to himself and 16 other co-conspirators. For instance, these applications contained false and fabricated gross income figures and false certifications that the businesses were in operation on February 15, 2020. Hunter and his co-conspirators fraudulently obtained over \$500,000 in PPP loans. In exchange for preparing the fraudulent loan applications and supplying spurious supporting documents, Hunter demanded 25–50% of each loan obtained by the co-conspirators.

When the PPP loan program ended in 2021, Hunter turned to “card cracking”—a scheme to defraud financial institutions through the deposit of fraudulently altered stolen checks from small businesses. Hunter and his co-conspirators recruited at least 16 accountholders to provide their debit cards and personal identification numbers (PINs). They stole legitimate checks from various small businesses, altered the checks to make them payable to accounts controlled by conspirators, and deposited at least 16 altered checks purportedly worth over \$150,000. Immediately after these deposits, they conducted successive transactions to quickly access the credited funds before the banks determined the deposits to be worthless. Despite knowing of the federal investigation, Hunter continued in his card cracking schemes. At the time of his arrest, Hunter possessed two additional altered checks purportedly worth over \$27,000, along with several bank cards in the names of other people.

Even though he lacked verifiable, legitimate income throughout these schemes, Hunter flaunted his fraud proceeds and luxurious lifestyle on social media. His Instagram account and bank records reflect postings with thousands of dollars in cash and money orders and expenditures for expensive

jewelry, \$26,000 purportedly for veneers, gambling, the purchase of luxury goods and clothing from Dior, Saks, Louis Vuitton, Chanel and more, attendance at professional sports events, trips and vacations throughout the country, and the purchase of a Range Rover.

On October 31, 2023, Hunter pleaded guilty to one count each of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to commit bank fraud. A separate hearing to determine Hunter's restitution and forfeiture obligations will take place on May 14.

Jessica D. Aber, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Stanley M. Meador, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Richmond Field Office; Ajay D. Lall, Acting Inspector in Charge for the U.S. Postal Inspection Service – Washington Division; and Troy W. Springer, Special Agent in Charge, National Capital Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, made the announcement after sentencing by Senior U.S. District Judge Henry E. Hudson.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Carla Jordan-Detamore prosecuted the case.

A copy of this press release is located on the website of the [U.S. Attorney's Office](#) for the Eastern District of Virginia. Related court documents and information are located on the website of the [District Court](#) for the Eastern District of Virginia or on [PACER](#) by searching for Case No. 3:23-cr-90.

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