

PRESS RELEASE

Westwego Woman Guilty of Conspiracy to Commit Mail Fraud by Defrauding State Offices of Unemployment Insurance

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana
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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA – Acting United States Attorney Michael M. Simpson announced today that **REHA JANE ARVIE**, (“**ARVIE**”), age 34, of Westwego, LA, pled guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Mail Fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349. **ARVIE** faces up to twenty (20) years imprisonment, up to three (3) years of supervised release, a fine up to \$250,000.00, or twice the gross gain to the defendant, or twice the gross loss to any victim, and a \$100.00 mandatory special assessment fee.

According to the indictment, beginning in or around July 2020, **ARVIE** defrauded, and attempted to defraud, various state offices of Unemployment Insurance (“UI”) through the submission of approximately 100 fraudulent UI applications. **ARVIE** recruited friends and family, via Facebook, to file these fraudulent UI applications. Additionally, **ARVIE** filed fraudulent UI applications for herself and others, in various states including Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Indiana, Missouri, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Utah, Texas, and the territory of Guam. **ARVIE** charged those for whom she filed fraudulent UI claims fees, ranging from \$1,200.00 to \$1,500.00. For example, **ARVIE** obtained \$267,612.00 in UI benefits from California’s Employment Development Department. Moreover, during the investigation, **ARVIE** lied to federal agents during an interview.

Sentencing in this matter is scheduled for September 10, 2025, before United States District Judge Sarah S. Vance.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief

programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>. The Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General, is an active member of the PRAC Fraud Task Force.

"The PRAC was established to promote transparency and facilitate coordinated oversight of the federal government's COVID-19 pandemic response. The PRAC's 20 member Inspectors General identify major risks that cross program and agency boundaries to detect fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in the more than \$5 trillion in COVID-19 spending, including spending via the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), and Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. This case was also supported by the PRAC's Pandemic Analytics Center of Excellence, which applies the latest advances in analytic and forensic technologies to help OIGs and law enforcement pursue data-driven pandemic relief fraud investigations."

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>.

The United States Attorney's Office would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General; the National Unemployment Insurance Fraud Task Force; The Pandemic Response Accountability Committee; the United States Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General COVID Fraud Unit; and the California Employment Development Department with this matter. The prosecution of this case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Brian M. Klebba, Chief of the Financial Crimes Unit.

Contact

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Eastern District of Louisiana

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