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**TWO DEFENDANTS INDICTED FOR STEALING MORE THAN \$800,000 IN
UNEMPLOYMENT AND COVID-19 BENEFITS**

Total Amount Stolen Between Both Defendants Exceeds \$2 Million

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Kareem Reeves and Michael Robertson were indicted on charges of grand larceny in the second degree, identity theft and criminal possession of stolen property for allegedly stealing approximately \$835,000 in unemployment insurance funds meant to protect workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Robertson was also separately charged in a criminal complaint with grand larceny in the first degree and other crimes for allegedly stealing more than \$1.2 million dollars from multiple private brokerage accounts belonging to a Pennsylvania man.

The exhaustive financial investigation, which began in 2022, included extensive analysis of hundreds of financial documents and examination of state workforce agency records from 11 states throughout the country.

District Attorney Katz said: “As alleged, these defendants took advantage of a lifeline for those impacted by the pandemic to pad their own pockets to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars – affecting more than 50 victims throughout the country. One of the defendants also hacked into brokerage accounts and stole more than \$1 million dollars in private funds. We are committed to holding fraudsters accountable and protecting the safety nets that support our communities in times of need. I thank my prosecutors as well as our law enforcement partners in the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, New York State Department of Labor and NYPD Financial Crime Task Force for their work on this long-term investigation.”

Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Northeast Region of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, said: “An important part of the mission of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations of fraud involving unemployment insurance programs. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to safeguard benefits intended for unemployed American workers.”

Darnell Edwards, Acting Inspector in Charge of the USPIS New York Division, said: “These individuals allegedly defrauded the government by manipulating unemployment insurance assistance provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that was intended to support those suffering during the pandemic. The US Postal Inspection Service is unwavering in its mission to protect and serve the community, ensuring that the proper aid reaches those in need, all while holding accountable those who seek to exploit these critical resources.”

New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon said: “At the New York State Department of Labor, our mission is to protect workers and ensure that Unemployment Insurance benefits reach those who truly need them. We remain vigilant in our fight against fraud, and I thank our partners in the Queens County District Attorney’s Office and law enforcement for their ongoing commitment to safeguarding these vital resources alongside us.”

Reeves, 36, of 200th Street in St. Albans, was arraigned Wednesday on an indictment charging him with grand larceny in the second degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree, attempted grand larceny in the second degree, identity theft in the first degree and other crimes. Supreme Court Justice Toni Cimino ordered him to return to court on November 10. If convicted of the top count, he faces a potential maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

Robertson, 35, also of 200th Street in St. Albans, was arraigned Thursday on the criminal complaint and the indictment. Criminal Court Judge Glenda Hernandez remanded him into custody on the complaint and ordered him to return to court on October 6. Separately, Supreme Court Justice Cimino ordered Robertson to return to court on the indictment on November 10. If convicted on the top count on the criminal complaint, he faces a potential maximum sentence of 25 years in prison.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the indictment and investigation, in 2022, prosecutors in the DA’s Major Economic Crimes Bureau were alerted to potentially fraudulent transactions that took place between January 2020 and January 2022.

The subsequent investigation revealed that Reeves sent fraudulent unemployment insurance applications in the names of 42 different victims to workforce agencies in 11 different states, including in New York. He allegedly stole approximately \$655,706 and attempted to steal another \$59,590.

Around the same time, Robertson is alleged to have sent fraudulent unemployment insurance applications in the names of 12 victims to the New York State Department of Labor, allegedly stealing \$180,201 in benefits and attempting to steal another \$109,350.

On or about March of 2025, Robertson is alleged to have illegally gained access to multiple brokerage accounts belonging to a Pennsylvania man. After taking control of the victim’s accounts, he allegedly illegally authorized the sale of over \$1.2 million dollars of the victim’s assets and then sent the proceeds of that sale to a bank account he controlled. Further investigation revealed that Robertson proceeded to launder the money through multiple additional bank accounts in his name.

Reeves and Robertson were arrested Wednesday morning inside their home by members of the NYPD, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the U.S. Department of Labor. Numerous financial documents allegedly linking Robertson to the March 2025 crime were recovered inside the residence during arrest.

The investigation was conducted by members of the District Attorney’s Major Economic Crimes Bureau in close partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the New York State Department of Labor and the NYPD Financial Crimes Task Force provided crucial assistance.

Assistant District Attorney Samuel A. Goodstein of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau is prosecuting the cases, with assistance from Intelligence Analyst Luis Perez-Cortes, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, Catherine Kane, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, and Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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