

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, April 29, 2022

Greensburg Woman Sentenced to Federal Prison for Theft of Government Funds

United States Attorney Ronald C. Gathe, Jr. announced that U.S. District Judge Brian A. Jackson sentenced Neiyondra Rogers, age 38, of Greensburg, Louisiana, to 33 months in federal prison following her conviction for theft of government funds. The Court further sentenced Rogers to serve three years of supervised release following her term of imprisonment and ordered her to pay restitution in the amount of \$179,252.85 to the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program; \$20,832 to the Small Business Administration (SBA); and \$16,961 to the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

According to admissions made as part of her guilty plea, beginning in January 2016, Rogers participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program as a provider. Under the program, she was required to provide children in her care with nutritious meals. To be reimbursed for her services, she would have to submit reimbursement claims to her sponsor, Feliciana Day Care Home Agency.

Although Rogers routinely submitted claims for reimbursement, claiming that she had provided meals to children in her care, in fact, she never watched any children while participating in the program, nor did she provide the meals reflected in her claims. Based on the fraudulent claims she submitted, the defendant was reimbursed at least \$31,224.27 in federal funds from the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

In addition to submitting fraudulent reimbursement claims, Rogers discussed the program and work with Feliciana Day Care Home Agency with other providers. For these individuals, Rogers assisted the individuals in signing up for the program, and she submitted false reimbursement claims on their behalf or aided them in submitting false reimbursement claims, resulting in the sponsor, Feliciana Day Care Home Agency, issuing the individuals reimbursement checks. On numerous occasions, Rogers would collect the reimbursement checks issued to the individuals with whom she discussed the program and would endorse their checks to herself, sometimes without their knowledge or consent. In total, Rogers endorsed and cashed checks in the names of other providers for a total of \$91,635.34. The money she stole belonged to the United States Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Lastly, beginning in April 2020, Rogers submitted fraudulent claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance ("PUA") and Disaster Unemployment Assistance ("DUA") to the Louisiana Workforce Commission ("LWC"). As a result of these fraudulent claims, she received at least \$16,951.00 in unemployment benefits to which she was not entitled. In March 2021, Rogers also applied for and received a loan under the Small Business Administration's ("SBA's") Paycheck Protection Program ("PPP"). In that application, Rogers falsely represented that she was the owner of a sole proprietorship engaged in the catering business when in fact, no such business existed. As a result, the defendant received an additional \$20,832.00 in government funds to which she was not entitled.

U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Gathe, Jr. stated, "This defendant committed fraud in government programs intended for underprivileged children and those adversely affected by Covid-19. Prosecuting this type of fraud is a high priority of this office, and I want to thank our prosecutors and our law enforcement partners for their efforts in bringing this defendant to justice."

"Neiyondra Rogers used funds designated for the USDA Summer Foods Service Program, which provides nutritional meals for children in low-income families, for her own personal expenses. Defrauding taxpayers and taking food out of the mouths of children who can't provide for themselves is reprehensible," said Douglas A. Williams, Jr., FBI New Orleans Special Agent in Charge. "I would like to thank our partners at the U.S. Attorney's Office Middle District of Louisiana and Louisiana Office of Inspector General for their efforts in helping the FBI disrupt this type of fraud."

Louisiana Inspector General Stephen Street commented, "This is just the latest in a series of successful criminal cases where summer nutrition funds were stolen with no regard for the children they were intended to benefit. Neiyondra Rogers shamelessly broke the law out of pure personal greed, and today's sentencing brings this sad episode to a just conclusion. We remain committed to working with our law enforcement partners to root out this corruption wherever it may be found." Street added, "I want to thank United States Attorney Ron Gathe and his staff for their usual outstanding work, as well as our partners at the FBI."

This matter was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Louisiana Office of Inspector General and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kristen Craig.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Louisiana, Middle

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