

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* LOUISIANA

[U.S. Attorneys](#) » [Middle District of Louisiana](#) » [News](#)

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 22, 2021

Plaquemine Woman Indicted for Mail Fraud and Wire Fraud

A federal grand jury recently returned a three-count indictment charging Lestreonie Renee Rodrigue, age 26, of Plaquemine, Louisiana, with mail fraud and wire fraud. Rodrigue appeared for her arraignment today and pled not guilty to the pending charges.

According to the indictment, between July 2020 and June 2021, Rodrigue submitted claims for unemployment benefits in her name and in the names of other individuals in multiple states, including California, among others. Rodrigue also submitted claims for Paycheck Protection Program ("PPP") benefits in the names of fictitious businesses and based on fictitious business profits and losses.

Further, Rodrigue obtained names, birth dates, and Social Security numbers of others, and submitted fraudulent claims for unemployment benefits in their names, with and without their knowledge or consent. Rodrigue used social media to obtain as many people's identifying information as possible to file as many unemployment claims as possible. Upon submitting the claims and receiving the funds, she either gave a cut of the funds to the people or kept all the funds for herself. Through her scheme, Rodrigue obtained hundreds of thousands of dollars in prepaid debit cards in the mail.

In March 2021, Rodrigue also devised a scheme to defraud the Small Business Administration by filing false and fraudulent applications for PPP funds. In furtherance of the scheme, on or about March 6, 2021, she submitted false and misleading PPP applications in the business name of "Lestreonie Rodrigue" seeking PPP funds. Rodrigue submitted a forged bank statement, false tax documents, and made misrepresentations in her PPP applications.

Throughout the course of the fraudulent schemes, Rodrigue caused \$20,833.00 to be deposited into her bank account, to which she was not entitled. Additionally, Rodrigue caused over \$500,000 in prepaid debit cards to be mailed to her addresses, to which she and others were not entitled.

This matter is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Labor and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Edward H. Warner and Assistant United States Attorney Elizabeth White who also serves as Deputy Criminal Chief.

NOTE: An indictment is an accusation by a grand jury. The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless adjudicated guilty at trial or through a guilty plea.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Louisiana, Middle

Updated October 22, 2021