

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 29, 2021

Georgia man admits submitting false information to obtain COVID-19 disaster relief funding

Part of relief funds used to purchase a Pokemon card

DUBLIN, GA: A Laurens County, Georgia man has admitted lying to obtain a COVID-19 disaster relief loan and using a large portion of the money to buy a collectible trading card.

Vinath Oudomsine, 31, of Dublin, Ga., pled guilty in U.S. District Court to an Information charging him with one count of Wire Fraud, said David H. Estes, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia. Oudomsine's plea subjects him to a maximum statutory penalty of up to 20 years in prison and substantial fines, followed by up to three years of supervised release after completion of any prison term. There is no parole in the federal system.

"The unlawful taking of taxpayer dollars is always disgusting, but in this context, the taking from emergency relief funds intended to help our neighbors and their businesses is outrageous," said Acting U.S. Attorney Estes. "I want the hard working citizens of this District to know that this Office will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to hold accountable those who would fraudulently obtain and misuse these relief funds."

As described in the Information and court proceedings, starting on or around July 2020, Oudomsine applied to the SBA for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) ostensibly for an "entertainment services" business in Dublin with 10 employees and gross revenues of \$235,000 in the 12 months preceding the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of fraudulent representations on Oudomsine's application, the SBA deposited \$85,000 into Oudomsine's bank account on Aug. 4, 2020. Oudomsine later used \$57,789 of the funds to purchase a Pokémon trading card.

"COVID-19 disaster relief loans are issued by the government to help legitimate businesses who are struggling to survive during the pandemic," said Chris Hacker, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Atlanta. "The FBI and our law enforcement partners are dedicated to holding accountable anyone who would abuse taxpayer dollars and divert them from citizens who desperately need them."

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](tel:866-720-5721) or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General investigated the case. Oudomsine is being prosecuted for the United States by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jonathan A. Porter and Patrick J. Schwedler.

Topic(s):

Coronavirus

Disaster Fraud

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Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

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