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PRESS RELEASE

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Four Suspects Indicted for Filing Fraudulent COVID -19 Unemployment Insurance Claims Totaling over \$700K

BALTIMORE, MD (June 27, 2023) – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced the indictments of Cindy Boadu, Kelvin Boadu, Kwame Boadu, all residents of Rockville, MD, and Leslie Awulley Quaye of Taneytown, MD, for their involvement in filing fraudulent unemployment insurance claims during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cindy Boadu, Kelvin Boadu, and Kwame Boadu are each charged with theft scheme over \$100,000, conspiracy to commit theft scheme over \$100,000, 38 counts of identity fraud, and 38 counts of conspiracy to commit identity fraud. Leslie Awulley Quaye is charged with theft scheme over \$100,000 and 11 counts of identity fraud.

These charges stem from fraudulent unemployment claims that were filed in the names of dozens of identity fraud victims between June and July 2020, after the federal government allocated billions of dollars in funding to states for residents who were suddenly unemployed as a result of State of Emergency measures implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cindy Boadu, Kelvin Boadu, Kwame Boadu and Leslie Awulley Quaye are alleged to have assumed the identities of at least 48 identity fraud victims and used the victims' personal identification information to submit claims for unemployment benefits. As a result of these fraudulent claims, the Maryland Department of Labor distributed more than \$700,000 in fraudulent benefits onto bank debit cards. The defendants listed their own physical addresses on the fraudulent claims, so that they could receive the debit cards and spend the funds for their own personal benefit.

“The defendants not only violated the rights of innocent individuals whose identities were exploited, they undermined vital safety nets intended to support Marylanders who faced adversity during COVID-19,” said Attorney General Brown “In some of our darkest hours, as many struggled to keep the lights on and put food on the table, these individuals tried to get away with stealing what they thought was easy money. They failed. These indictments send a strong message to any criminal who may think they can hide in a crowd or under piles of paperwork, that they will be found and will face justice.”

In making today's announcement, Attorney General Brown thanked Fraud and Corruption Chief Alexander Huggins, Assistant Attorney General Alyn Pearson, as well as the auditors in the Criminal Division for their hard work on this case.

The defendants' cases will be heard in Baltimore City Circuit Court.

A criminal indictment is merely an accusation of wrongdoing, and a defendant is presumed innocent until the State proves the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/062723.pdf>