

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
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Ralph J. Marra, Jr., Acting U.S. Attorney

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 11, 2009

Former Employee of U.S. Attorney's Office in Philadelphia
Admits Using Defendants' Identities to Commit Fraud

(More)

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Breaking News (NJ) <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/index.html>

PHILADELPHIA – A former employee with the United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (“EDPA”) pleaded guilty today to federal charges, admitting she used a government-issued computer and defendants’ personal information to perpetrate a fraud totaling approximately \$34,435, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., announced.

Shakila Nakia Wallace, 25, of Philadelphia, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia before Judge Mary A. McLaughlin to a two-count Information charging her with once count each of fraud and related activity in connection with computers and aggravated identity theft. Judge McLaughlin released the defendant on a \$10,000 unsecured bond pending sentencing, which is scheduled for Dec. 15.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of New Jersey is prosecuting the case because the EDPA recused itself due to its employment relationship with the defendant.

At her plea hearing, Wallace admitted that from January 2005 until March 2008, while employed as an office automation clerk in the financial litigation unit with the EDPA, she used her government-issued computer to obtain online payday loans using personal identification information of sentenced defendants obtained through her employment. Wallace admitted that she illegally gained approximately \$34,435 in total through her fraudulent scheme.

Count One, which charges fraud and related activity in connection with computers, carries a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. Count Two, which charges aggravated identity theft, carries a mandatory two-year prison term that is to be served consecutively to any term of imprisonment, if any, imposed by on Count One, and a fine of \$250,000.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge McLaughlin will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Marra credited Special Agents of the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General, New Jersey Area Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge James E. Tomlinson, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kevin Smith of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: Erik B. Jensen, Esq. Philadelphia