

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Central Texas-Area Claimants Prosecuted for Unemployment Insurance Fraud

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) warns that criminal prosecutions for Unemployment Insurance (UI) fraud are pursued aggressively. TWC refers cases in which UI benefits are obtained through fraud or deception to local district attorneys offices. TWC has provided evidence resulting in the recent prosecutions of six North Central Texas-area claimants. Restitution orders totaling \$34,253 will be returned to the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund, which TWC administers for the state of Texas.

- Frank D. Allison, 43, received two years deferred adjudication probation from the 40th District Court, Ellis County, on the charge of state jail felony securing execution of document by deception. Allison was ordered to pay \$6,888 restitution and to perform 120 hours of community service.
- Lee E. Griffin, 34, received three years deferred adjudication probation from the 380th District Court, Collin County, on the charge of state jail felony theft. Griffin paid full restitution prior to sentencing, and was ordered to pay a \$500 fine and to perform 120 hours of community service.
- Keith A. Hopkins, 32, received three years deferred adjudication probation from the 199th District Court, Collin County, on the charge of state jail felony theft. Hopkins paid full restitution of \$6,270 before sentencing, and was ordered to pay a \$500 fine and to perform 120 hours of community service.
- Larry J. Like, 37, was convicted of state jail felony securing execution of document by deception by the 18th District Court, Johnson County, and was sentenced to five years regular probation. Like was ordered to pay \$7,954 restitution and to perform 120 hours of community service.
- Terry Perry, 44, received two years deferred adjudication probation from the 401st District Court, Collin County, on the charge of state jail felony theft. Perry was ordered to pay \$6,588 restitution and to perform 120 hours of community service.
- Jimmy D. Street, 43, received three years deferred adjudication probation from the 366th District Court, Collin County, on the charge of state jail felony theft. Street was ordered to pay \$6,553 restitution, a \$250 fine and \$248 in court costs, and to perform 120 hours of community service.

TWC's Regulatory Integrity Division is charged with detecting and preventing fraud, waste and abuse. The division enforces all regulatory statutes within the jurisdiction of the agency, including Tax, Workforce, Trade Act, Skills Development, Self-Sufficiency, Child Care and all other programs that TWC administers. Prevention, detection and elimination of fraud and abuse in the UI program are top priorities, ensuring that funds are available exclusively to those who meet the eligibility requirements.

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TWC administers UI benefits to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and are actively seeking work. TWC regularly cross matches UI claims with employer wage reports and other databases to detect possible UI fraud. If TWC discovers that claimants have received UI benefits through fraudulent applications, the agency seeks immediate reimbursement of overpayments. Examples of UI fraud include giving false information and failure to report self-employment or other earnings while receiving UI benefits.

To report suspected UI fraud, call the TWC Fraud and Program Abuse Hotline at 800-252-3642. For monthly updates on fraud convictions, see TWC's Web site at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/ui/bnfts/prosecutiondispo.html>.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.