

Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Southern District of Florida

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **West Palm Beach Man Sentenced for Conspiring with his brother, a United States Postal Service Letter Carrier, to Commit Access Device Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft**

A West Palm Beach man was sentenced to 54 months in prison for conspiring with his brother, a United States Postal Service letter carrier, to commit access device fraud and aggravated identity theft.

Benjamin G. Greenberg, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Rafiq Ahmad, Special Agent in Charge, United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General (DOL-OIG), Chris Cave, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG), Antonio J. Gomez, Inspector in Charge, U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), Miami Division, and Cissy Proctor, Executive Director, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), made the announcement.

Mikel Clotaire, of West Palm Beach, was convicted in July 2017, following a three-day federal jury trial in West Palm Beach, Florida of conspiring to commit access device fraud, access device fraud, and five counts of aggravated identity theft. Clotaire was sentenced before U.S. District Judge Donald M. Middlebrooks to 54 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, and restitution in the amount of \$114,743.00 payable to DEO.

According to the court record, including evidence introduced at trial, Clotaire engaged in a scheme to obtain fraudulent re-employment benefits from DEO. Clotaire's brother was working at the time as a letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. At least eight fraudulent unemployment applications, using stolen identities, were then submitted to DEO and resulted in the issuance of Florida Visa debit cards. The debit cards were mailed through interstate commerce to the residential addresses on the postal route. The cards were ultimately transferred to Clotaire and at

least two other co-conspirators and used to make withdrawals from ATMs. As a result of the fraudulent scheme, the State of Florida sustained approximately \$114,743.00 in financial losses.

Mr. Greenberg commended the investigative efforts of the DOL-OIG, USPS-OIG, USPIS and DEO. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Adam McMichael.

Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

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