

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Maryland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2022

Nigerian National Sentenced to Over Four Years in Federal Prison for Mail Fraud Conspiracy Resulting in the Loss of More Than \$500,000

Baltimore, Maryland – U.S. District Judge Catherine C. Blake sentenced Samson A. Oguntuyi, age 29, of Atlanta, Georgia, yesterday to 54 months in federal prison followed by three years of supervised release for conspiracy to commit bank fraud and mail fraud, bank fraud, and aggravated identity theft.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Erik L. Barron; Special Agent in Charge Imari R. Niles of the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General; Postal Inspector in Charge Greg Torbenson of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service - Washington Division; and Special Agent in Charge J. Russell George of the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA).

According to his plea agreement, between July 25, 2016, and February 5, 2019, Oguntuyi conspired with Johnson B. Ogunlana, age 25, of Middle River, Maryland and others to steal bank checks and credit and debit cards from the mail, open fraudulent business banking accounts using the names of victim businesses and the stolen identities of victim postal customers to negotiate the stolen checks by depositing them into the fraudulent bank accounts, and then conduct transactions with stolen payment cards and with money derived from the stolen checks. Ogunlana was a letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) in Brooklyn, Maryland.

As part of the scheme to defraud, Ogunlana intercepted and stole mail pieces containing credit cards addressed to individual victims and sent photos of the stolen mail pieces and credit cards through a messaging application to Oguntuyi and other conspirators. Oguntuyi then used the victims' personal identifying information ("PII") to activate the stolen credit cards and to obtain new credit cards the victims never requested or applied for. Once the stolen credit cards were activated, members of the conspiracy used the credit cards to make retail purchases.

As detailed in his plea agreement, members of the conspiracy registered fraudulent businesses with state government agencies using the names of victim businesses and the names and identifying information of postal customer identity theft victims as the agents and/or incorporators of the businesses. Ogunlana and others used stolen payment cards issued to identity theft victims to pay fees to register some of the fraudulent businesses. Ogunlana also stole banks checks payable to victim businesses, whose mail was serviced out of the USPS facility where Ogunlana worked, by intercepting their mail. Oguntuyi and Ogunlana then endorsed some of the checks by forging the signatures of identity theft victims and deposited the checks into the fraudulent business bank accounts the conspirators opened in the names of the victim businesses. The conspirators then withdrew the money from the accounts through cash withdrawals, debit card purchases and cash back transactions at retail merchants, wire transfers, and by writing checks drawn on the accounts.

As stated in his plea agreement, at least \$565,000 was stolen from two victim businesses and at least eight postal customers were victims of identity theft.

Ogunlana was sentenced to six years in federal prison for conspiracy to commit bank fraud and mail fraud, access device fraud, aggravated identity theft, and theft of mail by a postal employee on February 18, 2022.

United States Attorney Erek L. Barron commended the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and TIGTA for their work in the investigation. Mr. Barron thanked Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael F. Davio, who prosecuted the case.

###