

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - December 13, 2007

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Benjamin Leon Coleman, a former San Diego Charger, tendered pleas of guilty today to an Information charging him with 10 counts of submitting false loan applications, one count of using a false social security number, one count of aggravated identity theft, and two counts of tax evasion. The pleas were tendered before United States Magistrate Judge Barbara Lynn Major, subject to final acceptance of the plea by United States District Judge Dana M. Sabraw, at the time of sentencing. Mr. Coleman has been ordered to appear for sentencing before Judge Sabraw on February 29, 2008, at 9:00 a.m.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Mitch Dembin, who is prosecuting the case, in connection with his guilty plea, Coleman admitted that from June 2005 until January 2007, he applied for and received credit in the form of loans, lines of credit, and credit cards from Bank of America, Capitol One, Advanta Bank, JP Morgan Chase, and Navy Federal Credit Union using a variety of corporate entities and identities and by

providing false financial and other information to the banks in connection with the loan and credit applications. Coleman caused losses of more than \$290,000 to the banks and used the loan and credit card proceeds to pay personal expenses. Coleman did not file tax returns for 2005 and 2006 and admitted that he willfully evaded paying taxes on his income.

Specifically, Coleman admitted that in June 2005, he successfully applied to Bank of America for a loan on behalf of Advance Service Management and falsely claimed that it had revenue of \$2 million and 12 employees when, in fact, it had no revenue and no employees. Bank of America lost more than \$51,000 on this loan. In September 2005, using the name and identification of a former Charger teammate, and the false financial information of Advance Service Management, Coleman successfully obtained a credit card from Capitol One and caused loss of more than \$48,000. In December 2005, again using the name and identification of the former teammate, and false financial information of another corporate entity, New Century Business, Coleman successfully obtained a credit card from Advanta Bank and caused losses exceeding \$18,000. In March 2006, using the name "Anthony Coleman" and a corporate entity called ACC Enterprises, Coleman successfully obtained a line of credit from Bank of America. Among other things, he falsely stated represented that ACC had revenue of \$745,000 per year and 6-10 employees when, in fact, it had no revenue and no employees. Bank of America lost more than \$71,000 on this line of credit. Also in March 2006, Coleman obtained a credit card in the name "Anthony Coleman" d/b/a ACC Enterprises from Bank of America, using the same false financial and personal information. The loss sustained by Bank of America on this card exceeded \$14,000. In June and August 2006, using the name "Benjamin Rhone" and the social security number belonging to another person, Coleman successfully applied for two credit cards from First USA/Chase Bank. The total losses sustained on these two cards exceeded \$12,000. In October 2006 and January 2007, Coleman successfully applied for two lines of credit and a credit card in the name

of “Benjamin Rhone” and using the social security number of another person from Navy Federal Credit Union. The losses to Navy Federal Credit Union exceeded \$74,000.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the United States Secret Service, the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, and detectives of the San Diego Police Department working under the auspices of the San Diego Regional Fraud Task Force.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 07cr3246-DMS

Benjamin Leon Coleman

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Counts 1-10: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1014 (False Statements on Loan Applications)
Maximum Penalty: Thirty years’ imprisonment and \$250,000 fine per count

Count 11: Title 42, United States Code, Section 408(a)(7)(B) (False Use of a Social Security Number)
Maximum Penalty: Five years’ imprisonment and \$250,000 fine

Count 12: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028A(a)(1) (Aggravated Identity Theft)
Penalty: Mandatory Two-year sentence in addition to underlying sentence

Counts 13-14: Title 26, United States Code, Section 7201 (Income Tax Evasion)
Maximum Penalty: Five years’ imprisonment and \$250,000 fine per count

AGENCIES

San Diego Regional Fraud Task Force (United States Secret Service; Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation; and, San Diego Police Department)