



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

Donald J. DeGabrielle, Jr. • United States Attorney

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ANGELA DODGE

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

(713) 567-9388

**POSTAL EMPLOYEE ALLEGEDLY COLLECTS UNEMPLOYMENT
BENEFITS WHILE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED**

(HOUSTON, Texas) – Paula V. Jackson, 41, of Houston, Texas, has been indicted for mail fraud arising from an alleged scheme to defraud the Texas Workforce Commission by filing claims for unemployment insurance while gainfully employed with the United States Postal Service, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today. Jackson was arrested this morning by agents of the United States Postal Service - Office of Inspector General (USPS-OIG) at the post office where she works. Jackson is expected to make her initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Frances H. Stacy this afternoon.

On Oct. 1, 2008, a federal grand jury returned a three-count indictment charging Jackson with three counts of mail fraud. Jackson allegedly filed for unemployment insurance benefits between 2001 through 2007 while gainfully employed with the USPS. Jackson entered on duty with the USPS on Sept. 12, 1998, as a mail processing clerk.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is charged with overseeing and providing workforce development services to employers and job seekers of Texas. For job seekers, TWC offers career development information, job search resources, training programs and, as appropriate, unemployment insurance benefits. Unemployment Insurance is an employer paid insurance program that helps workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own (i.e. lay off due to lack of work, non-disciplinary reduction in work hours, firing - absent work related conduct, or quitting work - for specified/acceptable reasons). It provides temporary financial help to qualified individuals, based on their previous earnings, while they are looking for other work. The three main qualifying requirements for unemployment insurance include: the claimant's past wages, job separation and an on-going availability for work and work search. All of these requirements must be met in order for an applicant to receive benefits. The primary services of the Texas Workforce Commission are funded by federal tax revenue and are generally free to all Texans. Employers' unemployment insurance taxes pay for unemployment insurance benefits. Most people who have worked for the federal government can typically use their federal wages to establish a claim.

The indictment alleges Jackson, using her own name and Social Security number, submitted claims for unemployment insurance benefits to the Texas Workforce Commission claiming she had not worked or had underreported her actual earnings for the weeks she filed for unemployment insurance benefits. As a result, Jackson received

\$15,578 in unemployment insurance benefits payments in varying amounts, according to the indictment, consisting of approximately 17 paper checks and an additional eight electronic fund transfer deposits.

If convicted, Jackson faces a maximum penalty of 20 years imprisonment and/or a \$250,000 fine on each count of the indictment.

Special Assistant United States Attorney Tammie Y. Moore is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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