

Five Dominican Nationals Arrested For Identity Theft in Massachusetts

Five Dominican nationals were charged in federal court in Boston as a result of a federal investigation targeting offenders of document and benefit fraud. The defendants have allegedly used the identities of U.S. Citizens from Puerto Rico as their own. All five defendants have been previously arrested on drug charges under the names of the victims whose identities they have stolen.

The following individuals have each been charged with aggravated identity theft and false representation of a Social Security number:

- Jesus Ernesto Barbosa Pimental, 54, a Dominican national residing in South Boston. According to court records, Barbosa Pimental obtained a Massachusetts identity card in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Edward Obispo Garcia, 38, a Dominican national residing in Roxbury. It is alleged that Obispo Garcia obtained a Massachusetts driver's license in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Juan Jose Heureaux Carmona, 27, a Dominican national residing in Roxbury. It is alleged that Heureaux Carmona obtained a Massachusetts ID card in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Jose Narciso Rosario Maria, 47, a Dominican national residing in Boston. According to court documents, Rosario Maria obtained a Massachusetts driver's license in the name of a U.S. citizen.
- Jesus Alberto Baez Pimental, 37, a Dominican national residing in Fitchburg. It is alleged that Baez Pimental obtained a Massachusetts driver's license in the name of a U.S. citizen, and MassHealth records reflect an application

for health benefits under this same name.

The investigation was conducted by Homeland Security Investigation's Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (DBFTF), a specialized field investigative group comprised of personnel from various local, state, and federal agencies with expertise in detecting, deterring, and disrupting organizations and individuals involved in various types of document, identity, and benefit fraud schemes.

The DBFTF is currently investigating suspected aliens who are believed to have obtained stolen identities of United States citizens born in Puerto Rico. The DBFTF has investigated individuals who have used stolen identities to obtain public benefits which they would not otherwise be eligible to receive, including Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles identity documents, Social Security numbers, MassHealth benefits, public housing benefits, and/or unemployment benefits.

In July 2018, a DBFTF-led investigation resulted in the arrests of 25 individuals on charges of identity theft and Social Security fraud, and in April 2019, a separate DBFTF-led investigation resulted in 11 additional arrests.

The charge of aggravated identity theft carries a mandatory two-year prison sentence that must run consecutively to any other sentence imposed, up to one year of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. False representation of a Social Security number provides for a sentence of up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based on the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; and Phillip M. Coyne, Special Agent in Charge of the

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Inspector General, made the announcement today. Valuable assistance was provided by the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Boston Field Division; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General, Northeast Regional Office; U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations; U.S. Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service, Boston Field Office; U.S. Postal Inspection Service; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations, Boston; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, District 1; HSI Country Attaché Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; HSI Santo Domingo Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit; and the Massachusetts State Police. Assistant U.S. Attorney David Tobin and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Karen Burzycki of Lelling's Major Crimes Unit are prosecuting the cases.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.