



Department of Justice

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SOCIAL SECURITY CLAIMS REPRESENTATIVE SENTENCED TO TWELVE MONTHS AND ONE DAY FOR EXTORTION AND BRIBERY

Memphis, TN – United States Attorney Edward L. Stanton III announced today that Montrell Levelle Arnold, age 42, of Memphis, Tennessee, was sentenced by United States District Judge Samuel H. Mays, Jr., to twelve months and one day in federal prison for bribery and extortion under color of official right. Arnold was also ordered to pay \$3,473.54 in restitution to the United States Social Security Administration and to serve two years of supervised release.

According to the Indictment and to information presented in court, on at least five occasions while Arnold was working as a Claims Representative for the United States Social Security Administration (SSA) in Memphis, he offered to “process” purported one-time Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments for beneficiaries in exchange for a fee. Several SSI beneficiaries agreed to pay Arnold a fee to process this purported one-time benefit payment, and at least one beneficiary paid Arnold \$1,500 in cash.

Once the purported benefit payment had been electronically deposited into a beneficiary’s account, Arnold would then contact the beneficiary by telephone and by text message to confirm receipt of payment and to make arrangements to obtain his “processing fee.”

“Because of his brazen criminal scheme, Arnold now faces a prison sentence and must pay back the money he stole. We will continue to work closely with the SSA to pursue, prosecute, and bring to justice those who use their position of authority to steal from honest American taxpayers,” stated United States Attorney Edward L. Stanton III.

“While employee fraud is rare in SSA’s dedicated work force, the Office of the Inspector General has no higher priority than the investigation and prosecution of those who violate the public trust. I’m grateful that the U.S. Attorney’s office shares our determination to ensure the integrity of SSA’s programs,” said Wayne Warren, Special Agent in Charge, United States Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General.

The case was investigated by the United States Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General. Assistant U.S. Attorney Leetra Harris represented the government.