

CRIME

# South Florida man found guilty in the largest food stamp fraud bust in U.S. history

BY ALEX HARRIS

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Michelson Janvier, 26, was found guilty of a massive food stamp fraud scheme spanning several counties. *PBSO*



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A Florida man is facing up to 85 years in prison for his role in a multi-county food stamp fraud scheme that involved hundreds of stolen identities and a cash-for-benefits scam at the Opa-locka Hialeah flea market.

His bust was part of a 2016 fraud take-down officials called the largest in U.S. history.

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Michelson Janvier, 26, was found guilty of two counts of public assistance fraud and two counts of fraudulent use of personal identification on Sept. 17, as first reported by the [Palm Beach Post](#). He used more than 500 stolen identities

(including one dead person's) from Palm Beach County to steal more than \$260,000 in SNAP benefits from the state.

Investigators tailed Janvier to the Opa-locka Hialeah flea market, where they saw him enter a stall alone. While he was in there, the investigators got two pings for two separate \$200 transactions to two cards possibly obtained through identity theft. They saw Janvier leave with no merchandise but clutching a wad of cash.

Investigators linked Janvier to hundreds of such transactions at the flea market, Walmarts and grocery stores. They found multiple occasions where an entire month's worth of benefits was used up in one transaction.

What could be the largest food stamp fraud bust in U.S. history caught on camera



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The bust from Operation Stampede/Cash Hungry is the largest of fraudulent food-stamp transactions and could be the largest in U.S. history. The Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, state

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Janvier was arrested in August of 2015 for domestic battery, and officers found someone else's EBT card in his pocket. He was found guilty on Monday, but his sentencing was delayed after he asked the judge for a pre-sentencing investigation.

He was nabbed in a [2016 investigation](#) between the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office and state and federal law enforcement called Operation Stampede/Cash Hungry that uncovered \$13 million in SNAP fraud. Police [arrested 15 people](#) in a raid on the flea market during the bust.

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