

Houstonian admits to filing over \$500,000 in fraudulent disaster relief loans

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

HOUSTON – A 26-year-old woman has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud, announced U.S. Attorney Alamdar S. Hamdani.

From March 2020 until June 2021, Khalia Douglas conspired with others to submit false and fraudulent applications to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Small Business Administration (SBA), the U.S. government and a bank for financial assistance.

As part of her plea, Douglas admitting to using her Instagram account "GoGettaKae" to post multiple stories advertising her involvement in filing fraudulent SBA COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) applications. Such posts include "SBA is back open. \$350 for method. Yes im doing applications \$100 upfront & \$2k when your money hit. You'll need a real bank account."

Douglas accepted payment for her services via CashApp where her clients would make payments to her and send a screenshot of the completed payment as proof.

She also submitted false EIDL applications for herself and false Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) applications for another.

Further investigation revealed Douglas filed eight FEMA disaster assistance applications related to Hurricane Laura.

Additionally, Douglas committed several other fraudulent acts like filing false unemployment benefits in Kansas, using another person's name to rent her apartment and using another person's bank account to deposit counterfeit checks.

Authorities discovered her phone and computer contained a multitude of various documents and discussions of fraud in text messages, emails relating to fraudulent applications, false tax documents, images of counterfeit government identification documents and more.

Due to her actions, the EIDL, PPP and the bank lost a total of \$351,007 with an attempted loss amount of \$514,415.

Douglas received approximately \$23,775 for her services.

U.S. District Judge Alfred H. Bennett has set sentencing for Sept. 26. At that time, Douglas faces up five years in federal prison and a possible \$250,000 maximum fine.

She was permitted to remain on bond pending sentencing.

The Department of Homeland Security-Office of Inspector General conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Rodolfo Ramirez is prosecuting the case.

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