

**For Immediate Release:** Monday, June 25, 2012  
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## Unemployment Cheaters Convicted

**PIERRE, S.D.** – The South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation continues to investigate potential fraudulent conduct of unemployment insurance claimants. In order to be eligible for benefits, claimants must be unemployed, able to work, looking for new work and cannot refuse suitable work when offered.

“The integrity of the State’s unemployment fund is crucial to its solvency and availability to people who are legitimately eligible for benefits,” said State Labor and Regulation Secretary Pam Roberts.

Blatant cases of unemployment insurance benefit fraud are referred to the Attorney General’s Office for prosecution by states attorneys. To date in 2012, the following people have pled guilty and been convicted:

<b>Claimant</b>	<b>Ordered to Repay</b>	<b>Sentence</b>	<b>County</b>
Trinity Bernard	\$2,645.43 in restitution. Pay \$109 in attorney fees; remaining court costs were suspended.	360 days in jail suspended. Probation for 1 year.	Pennington
Jonathan Bourquin	\$4,674.15 in restitution. Pay \$285 in court and fine costs.	360 days in jail suspended. Probation for 1 year.	Brown
Susan A. Carter	\$4,845 plus interest in restitution. Pay \$604 in court and fine costs, plus attorney fees.	10 days in county jail. Probation for 3 years.	Brown
Jeffrey Huyser	\$4,134.11 in restitution. Pay \$484 in court and fine costs and attorney fees.	90 days in jail with 60 days suspended. Probation for 2 years.	Minnehaha

Jacob Kainz	\$3,006.00 in restitution. Pay \$600.00 in court and fine costs, plus attorney fees.	90 days in jail suspended. Probation for 1 year.	Hughes
Jessica Keegan	\$6,110.20 in restitution. Pay \$417.40 in court and fine costs.	60 days in jail suspended. Probation for 3 years.	Union
Troy J. Kirkeby	\$2,356.64 in restitution. Pay \$284.65 in court and fine costs and attorney fees.	2 years in the state penitentiary.	Minnehaha
Tamara Mouw-Sterkel	\$3,306.00 in restitution. Pay \$379 in court and fine costs and attorney fees.	Probation for 1 year.	Minnehaha
Scott Pratt	\$5,124.48 in restitution. Pay \$251.05 in court and fine costs and attorney fees.	180 days in jail suspended. Probation for 5 years.	Minnehaha
Paul Snedeker	\$7,422.92 in restitution. Pay \$200.00 in court and fine costs.	95 days in jail with 90 days suspended. Probation for 2 years.	Minnehaha
Debra J. Whalen	\$13,731.64 in restitution.	21 days in county jail. Probation for 3 years.	Minnehaha

“The majority of fraudulent unemployment claims result from claimants failing to report they returned to work and not reporting their earned wages while collecting benefits,” said Secretary Roberts.

Claimants who misrepresent information in order to receive benefits must repay all the benefits fraudulently received and also forfeit the right to some future benefits.

To report tips on potential fraud, contact the Division of Unemployment Insurance Benefit Payment Control Unit at 605-626-7649 or [unemploymentfraud@state.sd.us](mailto:unemploymentfraud@state.sd.us).