



PRESS RELEASE

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Florida Residents Sentenced to Prison for Involvement in Stolen Identity Tax Refund Fraud Scheme

Filed More than 860 False Tax Returns Seeking Over \$1 Million in Tax Refunds

Two Miami, Florida residents were sentenced to prison for their role in a stolen identity tax refund fraud scheme, Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo of the Justice Department's Tax Division, U.S. Attorney Wifredo A. Ferrer of the Southern District of Florida and Special Agent in Charge Kelly R. Jackson of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Criminal Investigation announced today.

Roland Alexis, 34, was sentenced today to 42 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release. Alexis's co-conspirator, Jim Joseph, 31, was previously sentenced to 42 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release on Jan. 20.

"Identity theft and filing false tax returns are serious crimes that inflict tremendous damage on innocent victims," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciralo. "We will continue to work with our federal and state law enforcement partners to aggressively investigate and prosecute these crimes and, where appropriate, seek the maximum sentence available to punish the perpetrators, deter others from engaging in such behavior, and seek justice for the victims."

According to the indictment and information disclosed in court proceedings, Joseph and Alexis conspired to file more than 860 false income tax returns claiming more than \$1 million in refunds from the IRS. Alexis's conduct resulted in a tax loss of \$1.8 million; Joseph's conduct resulted in a tax loss of \$1.2 million. Joseph and Alexis each pleaded guilty in November 2015 to one count of a multi-object conspiracy to defraud the IRS, commit wire fraud and commit aggravated identity theft, as well as one count of aggravated identity theft.

Between 2007 and July 2014, Joseph, Alexis and others filed false federal income tax returns using stolen identities. Joseph and Alexis obtained the personal identification information including names, social security numbers, addresses and dates of birth, without the individuals' authorization. Much of the stolen personal identification information belonged to prisoners and deceased individuals. Joseph, Alexis and others recruited knowing co-conspirators and unknowing victims to obtain Electronic Filing Identification Numbers (EFINs) in their names through which fraudulent income tax returns would be filed. In late 2009, Alexis and Joseph, along with a co-conspirator, formed Worldwide Income Tax Multi-Services LLC and North Miami Income Tax Services. The companies were created with the intended purpose of filing fraudulent tax returns using stolen identities. Worldwide Income Tax Multi-Services was located in Miramar, Florida and listed Alexis as President and Joseph as Vice-President. North Miami Income Tax Services was set up in Miami and listed Alexis as Registered Agent. Joseph, Alexis and others then used the stolen identities and EFINs to electronically file fraudulent tax returns.

In addition to the prison term, U.S. District Judge William Zloch for the Southern District of Florida ordered Joseph to pay \$1,225,686.12 in restitution to the IRS. Alexis was also ordered to pay \$1,805,332.71 in restitution, forfeit two single family owned properties in Miami and \$369,776.18 in proceeds held in a bank account.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciruolo, U.S. Attorney Ferrer and Special Agent in Charge Jackson commended special agents of IRS Criminal Investigation and Homeland Security Investigations, who investigated the case and Assistant Chief Gregory E. Tortella of the Tax Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Neil Karadbil of the Southern District of Florida, who prosecuted the case.

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