



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Cincinnati Field Office *Special Agent in Charge Kathy A. Enstrom*

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LOCAL MAN SENTENCED IN IDENTITY THEFT AND FALSE INCOME TAX REFUND SCHEME

DAYTON, OHIO – Hiszan Blackford, 42, of Dayton, Ohio, was sentenced to 16 months in prison, 3 years of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$80,478 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in an income tax refund fraud scheme. On July 23, 2013 Blackford pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to file false claims for federal income tax refunds with the IRS and to one count of identity theft.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and Kathy A. Enstrom, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office, announced the sentence handed down today by U.S. District Judge Thomas M. Rose.

According to court documents, between January 2008 and November 2009 Blackford unlawfully obtained personal identifying information, including names, addresses, dates of birth and social security numbers by handing out employment application forms to unsuspecting individuals who would fill out these forms with their personal information. In addition, Blackford also purchased individuals' names and social security numbers. Blackford used these individuals' unlawfully obtained personal information to prepare false federal income tax returns in the names of these unsuspecting individuals.

Furthermore, Blackford created false Forms W-2 using the same unlawfully obtained personal information. Blackford knew the Forms W-2 were fraudulent because they listed false amounts of income tax withholdings. Blackford attached the fraudulent Forms W-2 to the false federal income tax returns that he prepared. Each of these fraudulently prepared federal income tax returns falsely claimed that the purported taxpayer was entitled to an income tax refund from the IRS. Blackford knew that the income tax refunds were false because none of the individuals had worked for the employers listed on the fraudulent Forms W-2.

The income tax refunds were deposited into bank accounts controlled by Blackford. Also, Blackford convinced other individuals to allow him to use their bank accounts to deposit income tax refunds and paid these individuals to do so.

Through this scheme, Blackford caused the filing of approximately 37 false federal income tax returns with the IRS, falsely claiming approximately \$80,478 in false claims for income tax refunds. In addition, Blackford and others stole the personal information of at least 25 individuals.

IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge Kathy A. Enstrom said, "Individuals who commit refund fraud and identity theft of this magnitude and with this degree of trickery, dishonesty, and deceit, deserve to be punished to the fullest extent of the law."

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Alex R. Sistla and was investigated by special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation.

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