



Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

News Release

For Immediate Release: June 5, 2009

Tuscaloosa Resident Arrested and Convicted of Unemployment Compensation Fraud

MONTGOMERY—Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that a Tuscaloosa resident has been arrested and convicted for making false statements in claims for unemployment compensation benefits. This is a violation of the Alabama Unemployment Compensation Law.

Shemisha Smith, of Tuscaloosa, was tried in the Tuscaloosa County District Court on June 2, 2009. An investigation by the Industrial Relations Benefit Payment Control Section determined that Smith received a total of \$1,176.00 in unemployment compensation benefits to which she was not entitled.

Smith was found guilty and sentenced to two years in jail, in addition to repaying the amount of illegally received benefits and court costs.

“The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations, in cooperation with the offices of local District Attorneys, is continuing to actively pursue indictments and arrests of those who allegedly draw unemployment compensation benefits illegally,” said Surtees. “The successful prosecution of these cases helps to maintain the integrity of the state’s Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund, which is used to pay benefits to citizens who are truly qualified to receive the money.”

Suspected unemployment compensation fraud may be reported to the Department of Industrial Relations by calling this toll-free number: 1-800-392-8019.

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Members of the media seeking more information should contact Public Information Officer Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.