



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, January 13, 2016

San Francisco Resident Pleads Guilty To Bank Fraud And Aggravated Identity Theft

SAN FRANCISCO – Charlyne Basada, also known as Charlyne Melendres, pleaded guilty today to bank fraud and identity theft announced Acting United States Attorney Brian J. Stretch and Jean Ackerman, Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration. In connection with the plea agreement, Basada acknowledged her role in a scheme to defraud four employers collectively of more than a million dollars.

According to the plea agreement, Basada, 38, of San Francisco, acknowledged she fraudulently made payments to herself from her former employers' checking accounts. Basada worked as a bookkeeper or office manager for four companies from 2011 through 2015. In her position at each company, she obtained access to the payment systems of each former employer. Basada admitted she devised and executed a scheme to defraud each of her former employers by using the corporate payment systems to initiate fraudulent payments to herself. In so doing, she created the false appearance that she was entitled to funds for wages, reimbursements and other payments. Basada also prepared checks that were intended to pay personal vendors of one of her former employers. Her employer signed these checks believing that they would be paid to vendors. However, Basada fraudulently completed the payee portion of the check to "cash" and deposited the checks into her own personal bank account.

Basada admitted that the total loss to all four employers from her scheme was \$1,085,918.90 and that she abused a position of trust at each employer. Further, Basada acknowledged that she made some repayments to some of her former employers, but the total amount still owed to her former employers is \$1,063,975.78.

Basada was indicted by a federal grand jury on September 11, 2015, and was charged with twelve counts of bank fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1344; four counts of wire fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343; and two counts of aggravated identity theft, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028A(a)(1). Pursuant to today's plea agreement, Basada pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft.

The maximum statutory penalty for bank fraud is 30 years' imprisonment and \$1,000,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. The maximum statutory penalty for aggravated identity theft is a mandatory two years of imprisonment in addition to any sentence imposed. Additional periods of supervised release, fines, and special assessments also could be imposed. However, any sentence following conviction would be imposed

by the court only after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing the imposition of a sentence, 18 U.S.C. § 3553. As part of her plea agreement, Basada agreed that the Court may order her to pay restitution in the amount \$1,063,975.78.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Benjamin Kingsley is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Jessica Meegan. The prosecution is the result of an investigation conducted by the San Francisco Regional Office of the United States Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Identity Theft

Component(s):USAO - California, Northern

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