

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: June 18, 2008

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TWC Prosecutes Two Rio Grande Valley Claimants for Unemployment Insurance Fraud

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) warns that criminal prosecutions for Unemployment Insurance (UI) fraud are pursued aggressively. TWC refers cases in which UI benefits are obtained through fraud or deception to respective local district attorney offices. TWC has provided evidence resulting in the recent prosecutions of two Rio Grande Valley claimants. Restitution orders totaling \$7,139 will be returned to the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund, which TWC administers for the state of Texas.

Cameron County

- Hilaria T. Foster, 54, received five years deferred adjudication probation from the 138th District Court on the charge of state jail felony securing execution of document by deception. Foster was ordered to make \$3,048 restitution.

Hidalgo County

- Dionicia Gonzales, 50, was convicted of state jail felony theft by the 370th District Court and sentenced to five years regular probation. Gonzales was ordered to make \$4,091 restitution, pay \$278 in court costs and perform 120 hours of community service.

TWC's Regulatory Integrity Division is charged with detecting and preventing fraud, waste and abuse. The division enforces all regulatory statutes within the jurisdiction of the agency, including Tax, Workforce, Trade Act, Skills Development, Self-Sufficiency, Child Care and all other programs that TWC administers. Prevention, detection and elimination of fraud and abuse in the UI program are top priorities, ensuring that funds are available exclusively to those who meet the eligibility requirements.

TWC administers UI benefits to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own and are actively seeking work. TWC regularly cross matches UI claims with employer wage reports and other databases to detect possible UI fraud. If TWC discovers that claimants have received UI benefits through fraudulent applications, the agency seeks immediate reimbursement of overpayments. Examples of UI fraud include giving false information and failure to report self-employment or other earnings while receiving UI benefits.

To report suspected UI fraud, call the TWC Fraud and Program Abuse Hotline at (800) 252-3642. For monthly updates on fraud convictions, see TWC's Web site at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/ui/bnfts/prosecutiondispo.html>.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.