

# Montgomery County Woman Charged for Defrauding FEMA of Over \$1.5 Million of Hurricane Ida Disaster Benefits

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

## **For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Pennsylvania

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Jacqueline C. Romero announced that Jasmine Williams, 33, of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, was arrested today after being charged by indictment with one count of fraud related to a major disaster declaration, 24 counts of wire fraud, and seven counts of mail fraud related to a scheme to defraud the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) in the wake of Hurricane Ida.

The indictment recounts that in September 2021, President Joseph R. Biden issued a major disaster declaration for much of the eastern part of Pennsylvania, after the remnants of Hurricane Ida struck the Commonwealth. This declaration authorized FEMA to provide financial assistance to residents whose homes and properties were damaged by the hurricane.

The indictment alleges that after the emergency declaration, Williams recruited others over social media, advertising that she could assist them in applying for FEMA benefits. Williams then submitted fraudulent documents to FEMA on behalf of dozens of others, including fraudulent leases, letters from landlords, utility bills, earning statements, and home repair estimates. In exchange, Williams collected half of the payout for herself. In total, FEMA paid over \$1,500,000 in assistance based on false representations made by Williams.

If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of 960 years of imprisonment.

The case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security – Office of Inspector General with assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency – Fraud Prevention and Investigations and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Ruth Mandelbaum and S. Chandler Harris.

An indictment, information, or criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

**Contact**

[USAPAE.PressBox@usdoj.gov](mailto:USAPAE.PressBox@usdoj.gov)

215-861-8300

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