



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Virginia*

*Dana J. Boente  
Acting United States Attorney*

*600 East Main Street, Suite 1800 804/819-5400  
Richmond, Virginia 23219*

*FAX 804/771-2316*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release  
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For Further Information Contact:  
Laura Taylor 804-819-5400

John Kenneth Leighnor, Jr., age 49, was sentenced today on one count of mail fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 1341; and three counts of aggravated identity theft, in violation of 18 United States Code, § 1028A to a term of imprisonment 102 months to be followed by a 3 year term of supervised release. Dana J. Boente, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia announced the sentence, which was imposed by Chief United States District Judge James R. Spencer.

According to court records and testimony at the sentencing hearing, since 2005, while a prisoner at Federal Correctional Institute (FCI) Petersburg, Virginia, Leighnor coordinated an ongoing identity theft scheme. Armed with the names of his victims, Leighnor drafted correspondence to be sent by mail to various governmental agencies and other organizations to obtain official documentation for his targets. In connection with each mailing, Leighnor either claimed that he was actually the person he was victimizing or that he was a lawyer, advocate, or other designated representative for a targeted victim and requested the victim's personal documentation, such as birth certificates, family information, undergraduate transcripts, enrollment applications, and death certificates. Leighnor directed that all return correspondence be sent to his attention at various addresses, including: "Dept. 14375-077, P.O. Box 1000, Petersburg, Virginia 23804." He concealed the fact that the correspondence would actually be delivered to him at FCI Petersburg and that "14375-077" was his federal prisoner identification number.

Upon receiving the victim's identifying information, Leighnor planned on obtaining passports, birth certificates, driver's licenses, and other identification documents in the victims' names for use in traveling and obtaining funds from financial institutions and individuals. Leighnor also possessed documents and made statements to other inmates at FCI Petersburg illustrating his plans to file claims with the Claims Resolution Tribunal (the entity charged with handling claims on Swiss Bank accounts believed to be abandoned by victims of Nazi Persecution) for obtaining possession of abandoned funds in the Swiss bank accounts connected to Holocaust victims.

Leighnor was at FCI Petersburg serving his most recent 84 month sentence handed down by United States District Judge James C. Cacheris in Alexandria, Virginia, in 2003 for another identity theft scheme.

The investigation was conducted by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Michael Gill prosecuted the case for the United States.

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