

Department of Justice

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Western District of New York

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ROCHESTER MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEMA FRAUD

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Jarell N. Barney, 30, of Rochester, NY, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Charles J. Siragusa, to theft of government funds. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison, a fine of \$250,000 or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Marisa J. Miller, who is handling the case, stated that the defendant applied for and received disaster assistance benefits from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Barney claimed he was living in New Orleans, Louisiana and was affected by Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 when in fact he was living in Rochester, NY at the time the hurricane made landfall. As a result of his false application, Barney received \$2,000 in disaster assistance benefits from FEMA, to which he was not entitled.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Greg Null, Special Agent in Charge.

Sentencing is scheduled for Sept. 28, at 4:15 p.m. EST, in Rochester, N.Y., before Judge Siragusa.

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