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11 charged in DCF fraud case

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TALLAHASSEE -- A former Department of Children and Families employee has been accused of siphoning \$40,400 out of a state program designed to help poor people find housing.

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The Florida Department of Law Enforcement said today 10 others were also charged in the case.

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Carlos Jamal Scott, 21, of Tallahassee faces 101 counts of public-assistance fraud, along with single counts of grand theft, organizing a fraud scheme and an offense against intellectual property. He was held on \$136,000 bond at the Leon County jail.

FDLE's Public Assistance Fraud squad investigation resulted in findings that Scott, working for DCF, created files for fictitious applicants in the Emergency Financial Assistance for Housing Program. He then enlisted accomplices to pose as "landlords" for the non-existent homeless people, FDLE said, and changed or deleted information in DCF records after payments were made.

FDLE said DCF became suspicious in July and Scott was terminated as a clerk specialist last October.

Other Tallahasseeans charged in the case were:

Terrius Karl Bruce, 22; 24 counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of scheme to defraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$28,500.

Tajadin Ibn Rabbani Muhammad, 21; 17 counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of scheme to defraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$19,000.

Jarvis Demetrik Williams, 21, of Tallahassee; 11 counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of scheme to defraud, one count of grand theft. Bond of \$15,500.

Domonique Latoy McLaughlin, 20; six counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of scheme to defraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$10,500.

Quiana Monique Hart, 19; 17 counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$18,500.

Tarica Nichelle Epps, 22; five counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$6,500.

Eboni Lakail Law, 23; two counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$3,500.

Regina Janea Dawson, 21; two counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$3,500.

Chaquita Lanae Wesley, 24, of Tallahassee; two counts of public-assistance fraud, one count of grand theft. Bond set at \$3,500.

FDLE said an Atlanta man, Kenneth Lee Crowell II, 21, was also charged with 14 counts of public-assistance fraud and one count of grand theft in the case. His bond was set at \$15,500.

The housing program operates a fund that provides one-time payments to landlords to provide shelter for qualified applicants, to prevent eviction or to get homeless people into housing.

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