

Summary: FWS Employee Obtained PPP Loans With False Documents and Provided Incorrect Information to the OIG

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Report Number: 21-0608

The OIG investigated possible fraud associated with a Federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan paid to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) employee.

We determined that the employee knew that documents were submitted to the U.S. Small Business Administration in her name. Some of these documents contained false information. Specifically, the employee's partner submitted loan applications in the employee's name and included an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Schedule C form with estimated income and expenses for a travel business and a screenshot of earnings as an Uber driver. However, the employee provided us no evidence of any reportable income or business expenses related to either business. She also admitted to us that she had never generated any clients for the travel business or driven for Uber. We note, however, that although the employee knew that her partner submitted documents associated with her loans, she did not admit knowing at the time or otherwise that they contained false information.

The employee also gave incorrect, incomplete, and inconsistent information during an interview with OIG investigators, including failing to initially disclose that her partner registered her on the loan website; that the idea for the loan was her partner's; and that her partner completed, signed, and submitted her loan documents. She also provided conflicting explanations about the purpose of her loans and how she used them.

The employee repaid her PPP loans in full before we completed our investigation but after we initially spoke with her about them.

The U.S. Attorney's Office declined prosecution of this matter. This is a summary of an investigative report we issued to the FWS Director.

