

## PRESS RELEASE

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Thursday, December 17, 2020

# Rochester Man Sentenced to Three Years in Prison for Fraud Scheme

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Senior U.S. District Judge Richard Mills sentenced Chase Brown, 21, of the 1000 block of Heathrow Lane, Rochester, Ill., to serve 37 months in federal prison for operating a sham medical equipment reseller business that defrauded businesses and individuals from various states. A hearing has been scheduled on Jan. 19, 2021, to determine the final restitution amount.

The court determined that Brown's sentence be enhanced based on a finding that he engaged in 'sophisticated means' to carry out the scheme. Brown was held accountable for an intended loss of more than \$750,000; however, the parties have agreed that for determining restitution, the actual loss and restitution amount is more than \$300,000 but less than \$750,000.

Brown pleaded guilty on July 24, 2020, to charges that he established a business known as Midwest Surgical, LLC, in May 2019, purportedly to purchase and resell medical equipment. Government evidence established that the business did not operate legitimately and was used to perpetuate the scheme.

At the sentencing hearing, on Dec. 16, 2020, Judge Mills cited the extent of the fraud that was perpetrated on multiple victims in multiple states, and noted that Brown committed the elaborate fraud while he was on probation for deceptive practice in Sangamon County. The government cited examples of Brown's brazen fraud including stealing a friend's credit card information and using credit card information from another victim to pay for a Jeep, a Springfield bar bill, payment to a Springfield car firm, and to purchase a second vehicle for a friend. Evidence was also presented that Brown defrauded a teenager of \$14,000 he had saved from working jobs to purchase his first car.

Brown was arrested in Florida in March 2020, and has remained detained in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service based upon the court's prior finding that Brown presented a continued economic danger to the community.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Office of Inspector General and the Springfield Police Department conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy A. Bass represented the government in the prosecution.

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