



Former Amtrak employee charged for allegedly bilking customers of more than \$23,000 for a fake Amtrak trip to New York City

For Immediate Release

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NEW ORLEANS — A former Amtrak employee was charged with two counts of wire fraud December 21 after she allegedly invented a New York City Amtrak trip and bilked customers out of approximately \$23,000 to \$26,000 in payments for the fake trip.

According to [court documents](#), Kenya Butler-Small, a former On-board Services Train Attendant, recruited more than 40 individuals to purchase spots on what she described as a group trip to New York City that included related activities such as shows and museum visits. Butler-Small allegedly charged each victim prices ranging from \$250 to \$425 for the fake round-trip. Victims paid Butler-Small in various ways, to include sending payments to her PayPal account.

Butler claimed that the trip would leave New Orleans at midnight on June 21, 2019, and arrive in New York the following day, but she never booked such a trip despite telling victims that she had done so. When the date of the trip approached, Butler-Small falsely claimed that a passenger booked for the upcoming trip assaulted an Amtrak employee and issued a bomb threat on June 8, 2019, resulting in the trip's cancellation.

Court documents also allege that Butler-Small submitted fraudulent sick benefit claims to the Railroad Retirement Board. In truth, Butler-Small was working another job when she claimed to be sick. She received approximately \$4,679 in sick benefits as a result.

The maximum penalties for each count of wire fraud are up to 20 years imprisonment, up to three years of supervised release, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a \$100 mandatory assessment fee. The charges and allegations are merely accusations, and Butler-Small is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

The case was investigated by Amtrak OIG and the Railroad Retirement Board OIG. More information is available in the press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Louisiana: <https://direc.to/h4eG>.

Reports of fraud, waste, or abuse; criminal or unethical acts affecting Amtrak's property or operations; or mismanagement in Amtrak programs or operations can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the Amtrak OIG Hotline at 1-800-468-5469 or online at <https://amtrakoig.gov/report-fraud-waste-abuse>.

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