



Former Amtrak employee sentenced for defrauding Railroad Retirement Board

August 5, 2024

NEW ORLEANS – A former Amtrak employee was sentenced to four years’ probation and 150 hours of community service after defrauding the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board of sickness benefits, according to the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Louisiana.

According to court records, Tonya Butler, 55, of Slidell, made false statements to the RRB from January 2022 to April 2022 for the purpose of obtaining sickness benefits. In truth, she was working full time for an interstate trucking company at the time. As a result, the RRB paid her \$7,345.52 in sickness benefits. Butler also received \$7,818.22 in short-term disability benefits through an Amtrak sponsored union benefit plan and pandemic relief benefits totaling approximately \$62,000 to which she was not entitled. Butler was ordered to pay restitution totaling more than \$70,000 to the RRB, Amtrak’s benefit plan, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

U.S. Attorney Duane A. Evans praised the work of the Amtrak OIG and the Railroad Retirement Board OIG in investigating this case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward J. Rivera of the Financial Crimes Unit was in charge of the prosecution.

Reports of fraud, waste, or abuse, including suspected pandemic relief fraud; criminal or unethical acts affecting Amtrak’s property or operations; or mismanagement in Amtrak programs or operations can be made 24 hours a day via the Amtrak OIG Hotline at 1-800-468-5469 or online at <https://direc.to/hPAu>.

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