



SIGTARP

Office of the Special Inspector General
For The Troubled Asset Relief Program

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California Man Pleads Guilty to Theft Charge in Hardest Hit Fund Unemployment Mortgage Assistance Program

A California man pleaded guilty today to stealing tens of thousands of dollars from the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Hardest Hit Fund in California, a program that provides mortgage payment assistance for unemployed or underemployed homeowners.

Robert Charles Sneed, 56 of Indio, California, pleaded guilty to one count of theft of government property.

"Anyone who steals from or defrauds the Hardest Hit Fund will be investigated and prosecuted," said Christy Goldsmith Romero, Special Inspector General. "I thank the United States Attorney's Office and FBI for standing with SIGTARP to bring justice."

According to his plea agreement, in February 2016, Sneed lied under penalty of perjury when he signed an affidavit saying that he was unemployed, when in fact he was employed, to receive Hardest Hit Funds administered by Keep Your Home California. Based on his statement and continuing concealment of his employment, he received 18 monthly payments of unemployment mortgage assistance payments of approximately \$2,279. He received more than \$41,000 from March 2016 through July 2017. He then became delinquent on his mortgage and deeded his house to his 18-year old stepson, who filed a Chapter 13 bankruptcy petition based on Sneed's request.

United States District Judge John F. Walter has scheduled an October 25th sentencing hearing, at which time Sneed will face a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison.

Keep Your Home California provided these funds under the U.S. Department of Treasury's Hardest Hit Fund that provided mortgage payment assistance program that provided eligible low or moderate income homeowners who were involuntarily unemployed with temporary mortgage assistance so that they could avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. SIGTARP investigated the case with the FBI. Assistant United States Attorney Benjamin J. Weir of the United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California is prosecuting this case.

[About SIGTARP](#)

SIGTARP is a federal law enforcement agency that investigates crime and civil violations of the law related to the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act (EESA). SIGTARP investigations have resulted in the recovery of more than \$11.2 billion, criminal prosecutions of 460 defendants with 309 sentenced to prison, and civil enforcement actions against 25 corporations/entities.

To report a suspected crime related to EESA programs, call SIGTARP's Crime Tip Hotline: 1-877-SIG-2009 (1-877-744-2009). To receive alerts about reports, audits, media releases, and other SIGTARP news, sign up at www.SIGTARP.gov/pages/press.aspx. Follow SIGTARP on Twitter @SIGTARP.