

JOHN F. KING Commissioner of Insurance and Safety Fire

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NEWS RELEASE

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YEARS-LONG INSURANCE FRAUD INVESTIGATION ENDS IN ARREST

ATLANTA – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King announced today that Deamarkis Barber, 33, of Stockbridge, has been arrested following a multiple-years long insurance fraud investigation.

In 2021, investigators with the Office of Commissioner of Insurance and Safety Fire (OCI) <u>uncovered a fraudulent insurance scheme</u> by the suspect, Deamarkis Barber. The suspect created a fraudulent insurance company under the name of <u>'Dirt-Cheap Insurance'</u> and used that company to sell unsuspecting consumers an illegitimate insurance policy. Under all three companies, the suspect obtained victims by approaching automobile dealerships with seemingly legitimate business cards and offering \$50 for customer referrals. Consumers were tricked into paying their monthly premiums through money transfer services like Cash App and were then issued a set of forged policy documents.

The suspect has performed the same scam under two additional company aliases, All-Citi Insurance and Policy Pro. Since 2021, over \$100,000 has been stolen from consumers through these schemes.

"By selling these fraudulent policies, Mr. Barber placed every driver on Georgia's roadways at risk," said Commissioner King. "I am extremely proud of our investigators for their tireless efforts to bring the suspect to justice and protect hardworking Georgia families. Consumers should use this opportunity to learn more on how to protect themselves from becoming victim to these kinds of deceptive practices."

We encourage consumers to protect themselves from this kind of scam by utilizing the following tips:

- Always review your insurance policy and make note of any grammatical errors or obvious discrepancies, like different font sizes or off-coloring.
- Avoid paying bills through third-party money transfer services.
- Verify the individual or company is licensed to sell insurance in Georgia using our **online lookup tool**.
- Obtain multiple quotes for coverage; if one is substantially lower than the rest, then practice caution before purchasing.
- If you are ever in doubt, give our Consumer Services team a call at 1-800-656-2298.

Mr. Barber was taken into custody on November 15 by the Clayton County Sheriff's Office. He is charged with multiple counts of insurance fraud, forgery, and theft by deception across nine Georgia Counties. He currently remains in custody.

The mission of the Office Commissioner of Insurance and Safety Fire is to protect Georgia families by providing access to vital insurance products and safe buildings through fair regulation that creates economic opportunities for all Georgians.