

7-Eleven Owners Busted for Harboring and Hiring Illegal Immigrants

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced Tuesday that five 7-Eleven franchisees have pleaded guilty to concealing and harboring dozens of illegal immigrants who were employed at the 14 stores they ran in New York and Virginia.

ICE said in a [news release](#) that the defendants will face either 10 or 20 years in prison for knowingly hiring illegal immigrants, and for wire fraud. The defendants are also being charged with giving the immigrants fake identities that were stolen from U.S. citizens, including the identities of children and the deceased.

ICE says five 7-Eleven owners harbored and hired illegal immigrants to work in their stores in New York and Virginia.

They also housed illegal immigrants at their homes, and stole millions of dollars from their wages.

“These defendants knowingly hired illegal aliens to feed their greed, stole the identities of unsuspecting U.S. citizens, and swindled more than 2.6 million dollars in wages from their enslaved workers,” said James T. Hayes Jr. special agent-in-charge of Homeland Security Investigations New York. “This case serves notice to employers that they will be severely punished if they seek to profit on the back of an illegal workforce.”

“Using the 7-Eleven brand, the defendants dispensed wire fraud and identity theft, along with Big Gulps and candy bars,” said Loretta Lynch, a U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York. “In our backyards, the defendants not only systematically employed illegal aliens, but concealed their employment by stealing the identities of children and even the dead.”

ICE said the defendants owned and controlled 14 stores, and have agreed to give up the rights to all of these 7-Eleven franchises. Ten are in New York, and the other four are in Virginia.

Defendants will also give up five houses in New York worth about \$1.3 million.

ICE said the investigation was the largest criminal alien employment investigation ever conducted by the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice.

The defendants named in the case are Farrukh Baig, Malik Yousaf and Bushra Baig of New York, and Shahnawaz Baig and Zahid Baig of Virginia.