



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office  
District of Oregon

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 29, 2026  
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## **Romanian Nationals Unlawfully Residing in the United States Plead Guilty to Conspiring to Steal SNAP Benefits**

PORTLAND, Ore.—Two Romanian nationals unlawfully residing in the United States pleaded guilty for their role in a conspiracy to steal benefits from low income and food insecure individuals and families.

Aramis Manolea, 35, and Cristina Manolea, 35, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States.

According to court documents, from April 2025 through November 2025, A. Manolea and C. Manolea conspired to use stolen Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) account information and PINs to fraudulently purchase SNAP-eligible items, like infant formula. The stolen goods were packaged in storage units and loaded into vans and trucks for shipment to California. In total, A. Manolea and C. Manolea are responsible for stolen benefits valued at almost \$27,000.

On November 12, 2025, a federal grand jury in Portland returned a 26-count indictment charging A. Manolea, C. Manolea and their co-conspirators with conspiracy to defraud the United States, unauthorized use of access devices, possession, production, and trafficking of device-making equipment, and aggravated identity theft.

A. Manolea and C. Manolea face a maximum sentence of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and three years of supervised release. C. Manolea will be sentenced on May 22, 2026, and A. Manolea will be sentenced on May 29, 2026, before a U.S. district court judge.

As part of the plea agreement, A. Manolea and C. Manolea agreed to pay restitution in full.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation are investigating the case with assistance from the United States Marshals Service for the District of Oregon, Eastern District of California, and the Central District of California, and the Oregon Department of Human Services. Geoffrey A. Barrow and Nicholas D. Meyers, Assistant U.S. Attorneys for the District of Oregon, are prosecuting the case.

On April 7, 2026, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. The core mission of the Fraud Division is to zealously investigate and prosecute those who steal or fraudulently misuse taxpayer dollars. Department of Justice efforts to combat fraud support President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-

government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

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