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## News Releases



FEBRUARY 14, 2013 CHICAGO, IL

### Chicago-area woman arrested for allegedly selling fake documents

CHICAGO — A woman was arrested Wednesday on charges she allegedly sold fraudulent identity documents to illegal aliens. These charges resulted from an investigation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Allison Mendez, 32, of Melrose Park, Ill., was arrested Feb. 13 and charged in a criminal complaint with selling false identification documents.

According to the affidavit filed in support of the criminal complaint, between May 2012 and Jan. 2013 Mendez allegedly sold nine sets of false identification documents on six occasions. A set included a counterfeit U.S. permanent resident card (green card) and a counterfeit social security card.

During the course of the investigation, cooperating witnesses posing as customers allegedly placed orders for false documents with Mendez by sending her a text message with the photograph and the biographical information they wanted to appear on the documents. Mendez then delivered the completed documents to customers, charging between \$80 and \$110 for a set of counterfeit cards, according to the complaint.

The complaint also alleges that during a recorded conversation with a cooperating witness, Mendez stated she had been in the counterfeit document business for about 15 years and that her software program could make social security cards, insurance cards, green cards and drivers' licenses.

HSI was assisted in this investigation by the Chicago Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force, with additional support provided by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and the Addison Police Department.

If convicted, Mendez faces up to 15 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. As an illegal alien from Nicaragua, Mendez will be placed into deportation proceedings upon conclusion of her criminal case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Rick Young, Northern District of Illinois, is prosecuting the case.

The public is reminded that an indictment contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

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