

# Summary: Former BIA Employee Defrauds Government by Misusing Government Credit Cards

**Report Date: December 13, 2023**

**Report Number: 18-1084**

The OIG investigated allegations that Dema Martinez, a former U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) employee, misused Government credit cards.

Martinez formerly served as an Administrative Assistant, Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), in Lakewood, Colorado. Our investigation found that, from January 2012 to April 2019, Martinez used Government credit cards issued to her and other BIA employees to defraud the Government of over \$800,000. Over the course of her scheme, Martinez made multiple unauthorized purchases of goods and services from legitimate vendors and directed unauthorized payments from Government credit cards into various fictitious vendor accounts she created and controlled. To conceal the true nature of her purchases, Martinez regularly submitted altered and fictitious receipts, invoices, and other documentation to BIA in support of the unauthorized purchases.

Additionally, we found that, in January 2019, Martinez submitted loan applications to two banks in which she falsely inflated her gross annual income and included a falsified DOI earnings statement for support. Martinez received the loans, totaling over \$12,000. In February 2019, she unsuccessfully attempted to discharge those loans when she listed them in her bankruptcy filings.

We also determined that from approximately August 2020 to March 2021 Martinez misused a Government fleet card, intended exclusively for fueling Government vehicles, for personal use on multiple occasions. During the same period, she also used a Government owned vehicle for unauthorized personal use, including for vacation travel and personal errands. The total loss due to Martinez's misuse of the fleet card and Government owned vehicle totaled over \$2,000.

On October 20, 2022, Martinez pleaded guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado to one count of Wire Fraud and Aiding and Abetting in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343 and 18 U.S.C. § 2, and one count of Fraudulent Use of an Unauthorized Access Device in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1029(a)(2). On May 12, 2023, Martinez was sentenced to 50 months of incarceration, followed by 3 years of supervised release. Martinez was also ordered to pay \$826,109.52 in restitution to DOI, the two banks that loaned her money, and the U.S. General Services Administration.

In August 2023, Martinez was also debarred until July 2026 from participating in Federal procurement awards.

This is a summary of an investigative report we issued to the Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

