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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

More Than $180,000 Stolen in Medicaid Fraud Scheme



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced the arrest of Ratonia Thompson by the Plant City Police Department for stealing more than $180,000 from the Medicaid program. Over the course of four years, Thompson allegedly stole from the taxpayer-funded program, instead of distributing the funds to caregivers.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “The scheme concocted by this con artist not only exploited a disabled Floridian and the Florida Medicaid program, it also put the financial well-being and good standing with the IRS of other caregivers in jeopardy. Thanks to the great work of my team members, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, this fraud scheme was thwarted, and the perpetrator arrested.”

According to a joint investigation by Attorney General Moody’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, a disabled adult placed in Ratonia Thompson’s care and custody was enrolled as a Medicaid recipient in the Consumer Directed Care+ program. CDC+ is jointly funded by the federal government and the Florida Medicaid program, and allows disabled recipients and family members to personally direct the recipient’s care.

Ratonia Thompson registered with CDC+ as the disabled adult’s representative—an unpaid position that empowered Thompson to hire employees to aid with the adult’s activities of daily

living, such as bathing, cleaning and feeding. Instead, Ratonia Thompson routinely submitted falsified service logs claiming the services rendered and pocketed the Medicaid payments intended for caregivers through debit cards registered in the names of caregivers who previously provided services, but no longer worked for the disabled adult.

The investigation began after the Agency for Persons with Disabilities received a complaint from a former caregiver citing timesheets fraudulently submitted in the caregiver's name. Upon review, it was found that Gregory Thompson, Ratonia Thompson's husband, became the representative for the disabled adult and was responsible for submitting caregiver timesheets for payment. However, APD found that Gregory Thompson had died, but timesheets continued to be submitted by someone claiming to be him. Further investigation found that the caregivers reported on the timesheets no longer worked for the disabled adult, and the former caregivers did not receive payment for the services claimed. The investigation found that instead of the intended payments going to the former caregivers, Ratonia Thompson spent the funds on the debit cards for personal expenses.

Additionally, a former caregiver for the disabled adult received notice of an audit after the Internal Revenue Service discovered more than $23,000 not reported in tax filings. The caregiver never made that amount of money while working for the disabled adult and realized Ratonia Thompson illegally submitted timesheets claiming the services rendered and subsequently pocketed the money. According to the MFCU investigation, from December 2017 through March 2021, Ratonia Thompson illegally collected more than $180,000 from the Medicaid program.

Ratonia Thompson is charged with one count of Medicaid fraud more than $50,000, and one count of organized fraud more than $50,000; both are first-degree felonies. If convicted, Thompson faces up to 60 years in prison and $20,000 in fines. Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution will prosecute the case.

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The Florida Medicaid Fraud Control Unit is funded through a grant totaling $26,329,510 for Federal Fiscal Year 2021, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General. The Federal Share of these funds is 75% totaling $19,747,136. The State Matching Share of these funds is 25% totaling $6,582,374 and is funded by Florida.