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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Guardian Stole $12,000+ from Disabled Adult



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced the arrest of a woman for stealing more than $12,000 from a disabled adult. According to an investigation by Attorney General Moody's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, Jessica Lyn Duvall served as the victim's primary guardian before a new guardian was appointed. Duvall collected the victim's Social Security funds and spent the money on personal items instead of paying for the victim's care.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "This so-called guardian used her position of trust and authority to steal thousands of dollars from a disabled Floridian. Thankfully, my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigators stopped this fraud, and the suspect will now have to answer for her crimes."

According to the investigation, Duvall collected funds from the victim for more than a year. During part of that time, Duvall acted as the victim's guardian. At first, the victim lived with Duvall but eventually moved into a nursing home. Throughout the entire process, Duvall stole more than $12,000 from the victim, using the money to pay for non-care related expenses. The investigation found that once the victim moved to a nursing facility, Duvall never paid for the victim's care.

Duvall is charged with one count of exploitation of a disabled person $10,000 or more, a second-degree felony. The case will be prosecuted by Attorney General Moody's MFCU through an agreement with the State Attorney of the First Judicial Circuit, Ginger Bowden Madden.

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The Florida Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates and prosecutes providers that intentionally defraud the state's Medicaid program through fraudulent billing practices. Medicaid fraud essentially steals from Florida's taxpayers. Additionally, the MFCU investigates allegations of patient abuse, neglect, and exploitation in facilities receiving payments under the Medicaid program.

The Florida MFCU is funded through a grant totaling $30,219,404 for Federal Fiscal Year 2023, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Inspector General. The Federal Share of these funds is 75% totaling $22,664,556. The State Matching Share of these funds is 25% totaling $7,554,848, and is funded by Florida.