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OFFICE OF THE
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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Twenty Defendants Arrested for \$5 Million Medicaid Transportation Fraud Scheme



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today announced the arrests of 20 defendants in a fraudulent transportation scheme that caused more than \$5 million in losses to the Florida Medicaid program. An investigation by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit uncovered that the defendants, led by Jose Enrique Hernandez Fernandez, operated a nonemergency medical transportation service that billed Medicaid for thousands of trips never provided. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Clay County Sheriff's Office and the Columbus Police Department of Columbus, Georgia arrested the defendants.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "These fraudsters operated a non-emergency medical transportation service that was supposed to help patients receive care. Instead, they billed Medicaid for thousands of trips never provided and inflated the mileage for the trips actually completed—in all, causing a loss to this taxpayer-funded program of more than \$5 million. Thanks to my team of investigators and our law enforcement partners, this fraudulent transportation service did get somewhere—they each earned a free trip straight to jail."

The MFCU investigation revealed that Jose Enrique Hernandez Fernandez owned Sweet Transportation, LLC, which contracted to provide non-emergency medical transportation

services to Medicaid recipients. Over the course of at least two years, Hernandez Fernandez and Sweet Transportation, LLC employees billed Medicaid for thousands of trips never provided and inflated mileage on trips that were completed. GPS data uncovered in the investigation revealed that drivers frequently submitted claims for trips while staying at home, going on vacation, or traveling out of state.

Defendants include: Hernandez Fernandez, Carolos Omar Tellez Janez, Timothy Lambert, Luis Alberto Sierra Bernal, Luz Angela Daza Estupian, Marcia Vargas, Omar Andres Sanchez Buitrago, Yilber Ricardo Martinez Quinteo, Aldo Nordelo Janez, Ana Isabel Maur, Dairon Domingues Santana, Fabio Francisco Castaneda Amaya, Iliana Garcia Avila, Astrid Viviana Lineros Orjulea, Joseph Chacon, Juan Carlos Dulzaides Ortega, Juan Gabriel Perez Castro Gutierrez, Martha G. Guevara Paz, Renier Arcencibia Perera, Yoahna Betancourt Fernandez and Yunier Felix Hernandez Lopez. Chacon and Gutierrez remain at large.

All of the defendants arrested are individually accused of organized schemes to defraud over \$50,000. Nine defendants are additionally charged with racketeering, another first-degree felony.

Hernandez Fernandez and Tellez Janez are each charged with conspiracy to commit racketeering; racketeering; organized scheme to defraud over \$50,000; Medicaid provider fraud over \$50,000; and money laundering.

The case will be prosecuted by Attorney General Moody's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit through an agreement with Melissa Nelson, State Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit.

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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 \$29,707,695 for Federal Fiscal Year 2024, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Inspector General. The Federal Share of these funds is 75% totaling \$22,280,772. The State Matching Share of these funds is 25% totaling \$7,426,923 and is funded by Florida.