

May 10, 2023

Contact Kylie Mason

Phone (850) 245-0150



OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Two Therapists Arrested for Falsifying Information and Defrauding Florida Medicaid Out of More Than \$76,000



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit announced the arrest of two therapists for defrauding the Florida Medicaid program out of more than \$76,000. Paola Maria Ewing, also known as Paola Granados, and Ingrid Garcia swindled the taxpayer-funded program to pay for psycho-social rehabilitation services never provided. Granados and Garcia each falsified documentation, personal information, progress notes and reports to fraudulently bill Medicaid more than \$53,000 and \$23,000, respectively.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Medicaid fraud is not a victimless crime—it steals from taxpayers and damages the integrity of this state-run health care program. That is why my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit analysts, investigators and attorneys work so hard to catch people exploiting the program and recover funds for the state. I am proud of these hard-working public servants for their efforts to stop this fraud scheme and see that these defendants were arrested."

According to an MFCU investigation, Granados and Garcia deceptively claimed that their clients receiving Medicaid services resided at an assisted living facility, but instead the recipients lived at home or with family members. During the course of the investigation, Granados and Garcia claimed to be working with clients who, when asked, did not even recognize the two defendants. The investigation uncovered that the defendants knowingly falsified documentation, personal information, progress notes and reports as part of the scam to claim the defendants provided PSR services.

Granados is charged with one count of Medicaid fraud more than \$50,000, a first-degree felony and Garcia is charged with one count of Medicaid fraud more than \$10,000 but less than \$50,000, a second-degree felony. Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution is prosecuting the case.

#

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. From January 2019 to the present, Attorney General Moody's MFCU has obtained more than \$180 million in settlements and judgments.

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.