

## **Attorney General Jeff Landry Announces Four Guilty Pleas on Defrauding Medicaid**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Attorney General Jeff Landry announced today that four Northeast Louisiana women have pled guilty to defrauding the Medicaid program following an investigation and prosecution by his Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU).

Elaine Burrell of Bastrop and Betty Jean Tappin of Monroe pled guilty to criminal conspiracy to file and/or maintain false public records. Verna Marie Tippitt of Collinston and Laurean Burrell of Collinston pled guilty to filing and/or maintaining false public records.

The four were charged with creating bogus billing documents and/or a bogus personnel file for an audit conducted at DHH's request at the Universal Care LLC office in Monroe in early April 2011. Universal Care LLC – opened on or about June 6, 2008, owned by Elaine Burrell, and located in Bastrop and Monroe – was shut down by DHH in mid-2011 shortly after these bogus billing documents were processed and analyzed as being suspicious.

Attorney General Jeff Landry praised his office for their efforts and warned would-be fraudsters. "I am grateful to my Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for a job well done," said Attorney General Jeff Landry. "Every time someone defrauds the Medicaid program, resources are taken away from the poor and money away from the taxpayers. This unlawful and immoral act will be prosecuted as our office is committed to ruling out fraud, waste, and abuse in Medicaid."

Attorney General Jeff Landry's MFCU was able to recoup in excess of \$300,000 as criminal restitution and civil forfeiture. All four women were given a deferred sentence of two years active supervised probation by Judge Richard Anderson from the 19th Judicial District Court. Elaine Burrell signed a lifetime exclusion from participation in Medicaid/Medicare in Louisiana; the other three were ordered, as a condition of probation, to be excluded from participation for five years.

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