

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION FOR THEFT OF OVER \$100,000 FROM WETUMPKA NURSING HOME

(MONTGOMERY)--Attorney General Luther Strange today announced the conviction this morning of a former employee of a Wetumpka nursing home for the theft of \$115,734.61 of residents' funds from the facility.

"I am proud of the outstanding work performed by our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit to combat theft and exploitation of those in nursing homes," said Attorney General Strange. "In this case, the defendant stole from people who were especially vulnerable and whose resources are scarce and badly needed. I am pleased that he has been held to account and will be punished for his crime."

Joseph James Feagin Jr., 33, a resident of Wetumpka, pleaded guilty today before Elmore County Circuit Judge John Bush to one count of first-degree theft of property. An investigation conducted by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit determined that, while Feagin was employed as a financial specialist at Wetumpka Health and Rehabilitation, he accessed a number of resident accounts in the facility's computer database that had credit balances and changed the payee information on the accounts. Feagin then submitted refund requests on the accounts and had checks sent to himself, his boyfriend and five other acquaintances.

Nursing home officials immediately contacted the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and refunded the money once the theft was discovered.

Judge Bush set Feagin's sentencing for March 20. Feagin faces a sentence of 10 to 99 years or life imprisonment as a habitual offender.

Attorney General Strange praised the nursing home management for its quick action once the theft was discovered. He also commended the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for its investigation and the Unit's director, Assistant Attorney General Bruce Lieberman, who prosecuted the case.

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