

NEWS RELEASE

# Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

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## **AG ANNOUNCES ARREST OF A TALLAPOOSA COUNTY NURSING HOME EMPLOYEE FOR THEFT OF PATIENT TRUST FUND MONIES**

(MONTGOMERY)--Attorney General Luther Strange announced the arrest of a former employee of an Alexander City nursing home for theft of patient trust fund monies. Elener Wyckoff, 47, of Alexander City surrendered to the Tallapoosa County Sheriff's Office, and was released on \$ 10,000 bond.

The Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit presented evidence to a Tallapoosa County grand jury resulting in an indictment\* dated January 19, 2016, charging Wyckoff with one count of theft of property in the second degree. It is alleged that while acting as a social services assistant for Adams Nursing Home, Wyckoff caused several checks to be made from the patient trust fund. As a social services assistant, one of Wyckoff's duties was to manage the patient trust fund and purchase items based on the needs or wants of the patients. In this instance, Wyckoff cashed the checks and kept the funds for herself. The theft was discovered when administrators at the facility initiated an unannounced audit of the patient trust fund. It is alleged that Wyckoff stole a total of \$2,470.00. When confronted, Wyckoff attempted to conceal the theft by manufacturing and copying receipts from local businesses showing items had been purchased. However, no such items had been purchased or distributed to the patients.

Theft of property in the first degree is a class C felony, which carries a possible prison sentence of a year and a day to 10 years in the Department of Corrections.

Attorney General Strange commended the staff and administration of Adams Nursing Home and the Alabama Department of Public Health for their assistance with his Medicaid Fraud Control Unit's investigation. Along with investigating and prosecuting providers who defraud the Alabama Medicaid Agency, the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Unit is tasked with investigating and prosecuting fraud and abuse cases at nursing homes throughout the state.

*\*An indictment is merely an accusation. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.*

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501 Washington Avenue • Montgomery, AL 36104 • (334) 242-7300  
www.ago.state.al.us