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Southern District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sober Home Owner Sentenced to Over Five Years in Prison

Albert Samukia Jones Saye, a/k/a "Albert Jones," the owner of several now-defunct sober homes was sentenced in federal court today to more than 5 years in prison and ordered to pay over \$2 million in restitution, for his role in a health care fraud conspiracy.

Benjamin G. Greenberg, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida; Robert F. Lasky, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Miami Field Office; Kelly R. Jackson, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI); Jimmy Patronis, Florida Chief Financial Officer; Michael J. Waters, Special Agent in Charge, Amtrak Office of Inspector General (Amtrak-OIG); Isabel Colon, Regional Director, United States Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration (DOL-EBSA); and Dennis Russo, Director of Operations, National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB), made the announcement.

Jones, 27, of Boynton Beach, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Robin L. Rosenberg to 71 months in prison, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release and was ordered to pay \$2,071,406 in restitution. In January 2018, Jones pled guilty to participating in a health care fraud conspiracy and maintaining a drug-involved premises (Case No. 17-CR-80229).

According to court documents, Jones owned and operated several recovery residences, commonly known as "sober homes," in Palm Beach County from 2014-2016, including "No Drug Zone," "Carter Care Recovery," and "A T Way." When properly managed, these recovery residences, operated as alcohol and drug-free living environments for individuals attempting to abstain from substance abuse.

Jones used his sober homes to facilitate a health care fraud scheme. Jones referred more than 100 residents for medically unnecessary urine and saliva tests to Reflections Treatment Center, in exchange for kickbacks from Reflection's owner, Kenneth Chatman. In some cases, treatment center workers would forge patient signatures on sign-in sheets and submit their own bodily fluids for the tests. In return for referring insured residents for the treatment and testing, Chatman would provide kickbacks and bribes to Jones.

To further defraud insurance companies, Jones would encourage drug use among his insured residents, even providing and using drugs with them, to cause "relapses," which would extend their stays in his sober homes and lead to more unnecessary tests at Reflections. To keep the scheme going, Jones, Chatman, and other co-conspirators actively recruited people with medical insurance to reside in the sober homes by offering bribes in the form of free or reduced rent, money, controlled substances and other benefits. In

exchange, the residents would attend drug treatment and submit to regular and random drug testing at Reflections. During the time-period in which the crimes were committed, 36 insurance companies paid out more than \$2 million in fraudulent medical claims to Reflections. In May 2017, Chatman was sentenced to 27 years in prison for his role in the scheme and other offenses (Case No. 17-CR-80013).

This case is the result of the work of the Greater Palm Beach Health Care Fraud Task Force. The Task Force's ongoing investigation into substance abuse treatment fraud in the Southern District of Florida has resulted in 17 convictions to date. Agencies of the Task Force include the FBI, IRS-CI, the Florida Division of Investigative and Forensic Services, Amtrak OIG, DOL-EBSA, and NICB.

Mr. Greenberg commended the investigative efforts of all law enforcement agencies connected with the Task Force, as they continue to combat sober home abuses and health care fraud.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys A. Marie Villafañá and Alexandra Chase.

Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at www.flsd.uscourts.gov or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

Component(s):

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