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 1989-90 and 1998-99

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8.7	0	
8.1	5.2	
2.4	9.1	
0.9	12.5	
0.6	20.0	

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J. EMILIO FLORES/For The Times

Sandra and Edwin Flores paid benefits for Maria's birth to avoid deportation.

Davis Ends Medi-Cal Policy That Targeted Immigrants

■ **Health:** Initiative had pressed Latinas to repay birth benefits. Critics called it abusive and questioned legality.

By PATRICK J. McDONNELL
 TIMES STAFF WRITER

A program created in 1994 by former Gov. Pete Wilson that pressed immigrants for repayment of state health insurance benefits under the threat of deportation has been discontinued after a state audit cited widespread abuses and questioned its legality.

The Wilson administration initiative, which helped inspire smaller-scale efforts in Florida, Texas and other states, stationed state fraud investigators at airports in Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as at U.S.

Mexico border crossings. Working with Immigration and Naturalization Service agents, the state officers questioned, on average, more than 13,000 travelers a month, mostly Latinas, about past receipt of benefits, particularly for childbirth. California investigators were principally seeking evidence of illegal receipt of Medi-Cal—the state's version of Medicaid, the joint federal-state health insurance plan for the poor.

But many legal immigrants say that they were threatened with expulsion if they did not agree to reimburse California—even though they or their children were entitled to the benefits.

"I was told they would deport me if I did not pay back Medi-Cal," said Sandra Flores of Los Angeles, a mother of two U.S.-born daughters who repaid a \$6,632 hospital delivery bill.

INS agents at borders and airports, using profiles developed by California officials, would direct travelers to nearby offices where state fraud investigators were waiting to interview them. Most of those investigated were Latinas with children, the audit found.

State investigators had computers to verify whether the travelers had ever received state aid.

The program had continued despite a federal directive more than a year ago saying that the practice was an invasion of privacy and probably illegal without some evidence of benefits fraud.

Please see **REPAY**, A13

Continued from A3

The Wilson administration had pushed the initiative as a means of reducing fraud. Sean Walsh, former spokesman for Gov. Wilson, said the decision to scrap the effort is "sending a message that we welcome those who come to this country illegally and seek public benefits."

Problems with administration of the program, he said, could have been corrected.

State auditors found that children were eligible to receive a variety of public assistance benefits, including Medi-Cal, in 72% of the cases examined.

Gov. Gray Davis ended the program with little notice last month, following recommendations by the Bureau of State Audits, citing poor administration, numerous abuses and limited cost-effectiveness.

Among the most serious problems, according to the audit, was investigators' practice of suggesting to arriving travelers that their immigration status would be jeopardized unless they repaid the government.

State investigators typically told people they could "clear their names" by repaying the department for past Medi-Cal benefits, the audit said. In one case, a recipient was told to repay \$33,000, even though the person had received only \$3,200 worth of benefits.

The audit also found that state investigators attempted to influence INS decisions over who was eligible to enter and remain in the United States. INS officials eventually complained about state intrusion into federal immigration decisions, the audit noted.

Faced with several federal lawsuits over the policy, California has already agreed to return almost \$4 million to thousands of immigrants who say they were coerced into paying.

The 16 state workers assigned to the program have been transferred to other anti-fraud initiatives, said Walter Barnes, deputy director for audits and investigations for the California Department of Health Services.

While applauding the decision, health professionals cite the pro-

gram's ominous legacy: Many thousands of immigrants are now too afraid to apply for Medi-Cal and other public health programs to which they are legally entitled.

This chilling effect, health professionals say, has swelled the rolls of the uninsured and could result in more dangerous and costly emergency room visits, as well as the spread of untreated disease.

Many noncitizens now worry that receiving public benefits could subject them or their children to deportation, spoil their chances for permanent residence status, or make them ineligible to sponsor relatives who wish to emigrate legally. U.S. immigration law has long barred prospective immigrants who are likely to be a drain on public resources.

"Women in the eighth month of pregnancy with incredibly risky pregnancies are not applying for Medi-Cal because it might affect their status," said Lynn Kersey, executive director of Maternal and Child Health Access, a nonprofit group.

Many of those affected are children born in the United States, who are entitled to public assistance but whose immigrant parents refuse the help out of fear.

"Immigrants are looking for some reassurance that they're not creating more problems for themselves by getting their kids insurance," said Doug Porter, chief of Medi-Cal programs in California.

Davis' decision to end the initiative is an example of the state's new era of more immigrant-friendly politics. The governor last month signaled his intention to mediate an end to the protracted legal battle surrounding Proposition 187, the 1994 ballot initiative that sought to deny illegal immigrants such public services as education and medical care.

In addition, state officials have joined immigrant advocates in calling for the INS to ignore whether prospective immigrants have received health care benefits in the past when deciding admissions. The INS is now reexamining the policy.

Activists seeking to slow the number of new immigrants worry

that the changes could allow for fraud. Federal investigators have found some foreign visitors, including wealthy tourists, who billed the government for costly surgery.

"If there's fraud, there certainly should be prosecution and the American people should be reimbursed for benefits received under false pretenses," said Ira Mehlman, West Coast representative for the Federation for American Immigration Reform.

Sandra Flores, 27, a legal immigrant from Guatemala, says that she was never accused of any wrongdoing.

Upon returning from a 1997 trip to Guatemala, she was quizzed by an INS inspector at Los Angeles International Airport about past health care benefits.

She acknowledged that Medi-Cal paid for the delivery of her daughters, Wendy, 8, and Marla, 4. Flores, who is a legal permanent resident, is entitled to the benefits.

Even so, Flores said, the INS agent at the airport told her: "You'll have to pay it back."

Two months later, the California Department of Health Services sent a letter to Flores, noting that she had received \$6,632 in Medi-Cal benefits for the birth of her two daughters.

The letter noted that it was not a debt or a demand for repayment.

But Flores said it was made clear to her, by a state investigator and the INS, that she would be deported if she did not pay. She and her husband, a hotel worker, borrowed the sum.

"I worried about what would happen to my children if I was deported," said Flores, who lives with her husband and two children in a one-bedroom apartment in Hollywood.

Moreover, Flores said, she was told to discontinue Medi-Cal coverage for her children.

Even now, Flores said, her family remains uninsured.

"Not having insurance is a constant source of worry for us," Flores said.

"I just have to pray that my children don't get seriously ill."

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Call 1-80

SERVING OV

ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL SLIP

Date

12/11

TO: (Name, office symbol, room number,
building, Agency/Post)

Initials

Date

1. Irene Bland

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5.

Action	File	Note and Return
Approval	For Clearance	Per Conversation
As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
Circulate	For Your Information	See Me
Comment	Investigate	Signature
Coordination	Justify	

REMARKS

DO NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disposals,
clearances, and similar actions

FROM: (Name, org. symbol, Agency/Post)

Room No.—Bldg.

Phone No.

Dennis

5041-102

☆ U.S.G.P.O. 1992 312-070/40023

OPTIONAL FORM 41 (Rev. 7-76)
Prescribed by GSA
FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.206

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

14744 P STREET

P.O. BOX 942732

SACRAMENTO, CA 94234-7320

Re:

Case Name

Case Number

MEDS/55

Dear:

This acknowledges receipt of your letter requesting information from Department of Health Services (Department) records indicating Medi-Cal benefits received by you. Department Medi-Cal records indicate the following:

Name :
Account No.:
Period :
Amount :

Release of this information does not constitute a demand by the Department for repayment nor does it constitute a debt or obligation owed by you. The Medi-Cal Program does not require you to pay back any benefits you received. However, you may voluntarily arrange to pay the Department for Medi-Cal benefits received by you. The Department makes no representation as to how such a voluntary payment may impact your status with Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Any voluntary payments may be made by check or money order payable to:

Department of Health Services
Investigation Section
110 West A Street, 7th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

If you voluntarily repay the full amount of Medi-Cal benefits previously received by you, we will provide you with a receipt and a letter showing that all previously received Medi-Cal benefits have been voluntarily paid back to the Department.

Sincerely,

Investigator

CALIFORNIA AIRPORT RESIDENCY REVIEW PRODUCTION REPORT

FY 1996/97

S.F.	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Referrals Rec'd	114	85	79	19	58	42
YTD	114	199	278	297	355	397
MEDS Matches	19	17	13	2	1	3
YTD	19	36	49	51	53	56
Excluded	8	5	4	1	1	1
YTD	8	13	17	18	19	20
Deferred	5	7	9	1	0	2
YTD	5	12	21	22	22	24
Admitted	6	5	0	0	0	0
YTD	6	11	11	11	11	11
\$\$ Collected	27,206	16,635	14,400	6,795	14,638	24,993
YTD	27,206	43,841	58,241	65,036	79,674	104,667

S.F.	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
Referrals Rec'd	56	45	106	64	64	42
YTD	453	498	564	628	692	734
MEDS Matches	17	8	1	2	2	1
YTD	73	81	82	84	86	87
Excluded	5	1				
YTD	25	26				
Deferred	7	4				
YTD	31	35				
Admitted	5	3				
YTD	17	20				
\$\$ Collected	11,970	21,118	12,634	39,901	19,474	21,179
YTD	116,637	137,745	150,375	190,340	200,814	221,993

excluded = returned to point of origin

deferred = hearing pending (DHS not provided results due to INS recording methods)

January 1997 Activity Report**Page 4****CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS**

\$11,969.51 was collected and sent to Recovery resulting from 56 referrals from SFO. Of the 56, 14 were discontinued. Total cost avoidance was \$7,500.00.

Manila made 64 referrals, 5 of which were discontinued, 28 were active SSI aid code 10. Estimated cost avoidance is \$5,000.00 for Medi-cal, and \$252,000.00 for SSI. Paris had 9 referrals with 2 discontinued, 2 active SSI aid code 10 with an estimated cost avoidance of \$27,000.00. Seoul had 5 referrals with one discontinued and one active Medi-cal only; total cost avoidance \$2,500.00. Overall cost avoidance for the Embassies is \$292,000.00.

February 1997 Activity Report**Page 3**

In another case, Investigator Ebert received information that a Medi-Cal recipient was in a pharmacy attempting to pass forged prescription for Vicodin. The pharmacist recognized the recipient as a person he had reported previously for trying to pass forged prescriptions and contacted Ebert. The preliminary investigation showed that the suspect was currently out on bail for prior drug violations and had a "failure to appear" bench warrant for his arrest. He was arrested for the warrant and 3 additional charges of violating section 11368 H&S were added to his growing list of drug violations.

Sacramento II Investigators Angel Carrazco and Mike Estrada have been canvassing pharmacies in San Joaquin County in an attempt to educate pharmacists on the DUE program.

OTHER

Fresno's Supervising Special Investigator Ron Wells, along with Investigator Rosenhagen, met with the San Luis Obispo County Welfare Office to confirm a process which will expedite the handling of FTB/IRS cases. Additionally, they designed a referral form to be used for early frauds by SLO County. Bakersfield Investigator Joe Roman completed 7 Border Project "Fast Track" cases. He is presently working on a criminal investigation for 11173 H/S case. The case went to preliminary hearing, however, was continued by the DA's office pending complete restitution by the suspect.

San Jose staff referred 3 criminal complaint cases to the local district attorney's office, identifying \$4,023,00 in Medi-Cal overpayments.

Vallejo's Investigator Becky Larsen received word that her primary suspect, a Sonoma County eligibility worker, received 6 months in county jail. The co-defendant, a eligibility worker in Imperial County, received 60 days in jail.

CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS

Investigator Ramirez collected \$21,117.75 for the CARR/SFO project. There were 45 referrals with 7 being terminated for a cost avoidance of \$2,500.00

Manila had a total of 86 referrals; 6 of which were terminated. Total cost avoidance was \$128,106.00. Paris had 1 referral; Seoul had 8 referrals with 1 terminated; Frankfurt had 2 referrals; and Moscow had 77 referrals with 1 terminated. Cost avoidance for SSI aid codes 10 and 60 totaled \$85,977.00.

The total cost avoidance for the CARR/SFO project was \$216,583.00.

PAGE 4

BENEFICIARY/OTHER (cont.)

In the third case, the recipient requested to receive the SSI "food allowance" because she lacked cooking facilities where she lives. When Carrasco interviewed the recipient he noted she had full cooking facilities. When questioned about it she said she "didn't like to cook, was afraid of fire and it's less expensive to eat out."

Sacramento Investigator Margie Yates was received a case for residency verification. Yates made several attempts to talk to the person leaving her business card each time. Finally a man called and said he was calling for the recipient because she needed her checks. Then an attorney called and left a message stating he represented the recipient and wanted to meet to discuss the case. Investigator Yates told both she would not discuss the case and would only speak directly to the recipient.

Investigator Yates made one more attempt to make contact at the residence. This time a man opened the door. He yelled loudly for the client to get up and Yates entered the trailer. When the recipient finally came out she was incoherent and barely able to stand. Yates left concerned and contacted the police department. When they got there, the officer had to pound on the door for several minutes, calling the client's name loudly. When the client finally opened the door she was totally nude. The officers instructed her to put her clothes back on but she was unable to get her jeans zipped and fell over backwards. The recipient failed a "field sobriety test" and was arrested for being under the influence of narcotics. A subsequent warrant check showed she had four outstanding warrants for her arrest, one of which was a no-bail warrant for prior drug related charges.

The Vallejo Office completed nine SSI referrals. Three were denied, four had their restaurant meal allowances discontinued, and two were granted. Cost avoidance was \$27,000.00 for denials and \$6,528.00 for restaurant meal allowances. Total SSI cost avoidance was \$33,528.00.

COUNTY NEWS

Investigators Mike Estrada and Irma Hanagan report that Stanislaus County has again begun to make EFDP and case referrals. They have had recent changes in management and typically when this occurs there is always a certain amount of disruption to routines. Estrada and Hanagan will offer to provide training and/or information sharing for redirected or new staff.

CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS

INS Staff at SFO Airport made 64 referrals; 12 of these had been terminated, two were active Medi-Cal and two were active SSI. Medi-Cal and SSI cost avoidance total was \$23,000.00. Total collections for the project were \$39,960.49.

The US State Department made a total of 137 referrals: 96 from Manila, 22 from Moscow and 19 from Frankfurt. A total of 24 had already been terminated. Eleven were active on SSI; two were active Medi-Cal only; one was active SSI with Medi-Cal and 10 were active AFDC. Total Cost avoidance through embassy referrals was \$162,030.00.

PERSONNEL/TRAINING

The Chico Office, Social Security Administration, INS, and OIG are hosting a joint training session in Redding next month. Information and training on different INS documents will be shared. Social Security Fraud will also be discussed.

PAGE 4

SSI (cont.)

On May 6, 1977, Investigators Darice Harlan and Margie Yates, of the Sacramento Office, provided training and information sharing for approximately 50 SSI representatives. All responded in a very positive manner and gave Yates two referrals before they left the office.

Investigator Yates also met with approximately 25 SSI representatives at another office in order to discuss SSI and Medi-Cal fraud and the process for making referrals. Yates received two more referrals before leaving this office too.

In Vallejo, two SSI cases were closed, one case was found to have kitchen facilities in which the recipient failed to disclose this fact. Estimated cost avoidance was \$1,632.

CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS

INS Staff at SFO Airport made 64 referrals; 12 of there were terminated, two were active Medi-Cal and two were active SSI. Medi-Cal and SSI estimated cost avoidance total was \$22,000.

The U.S. State Department made a total of 222 referrals: 172 from Manila, 33 from Moscow, 7 from Frankfurt, and 10 from Paris. A total of 37 had already been terminated. Thirty-one were active SSI; two were active Medi-Cal and seven were active AFDC. Total cost avoidance through embassy referrals was \$316,318.

PERSONNEL/TRAINING

On May 9, 1997, Investigator Margie Yates attended a seminar on "High Tech Crimes", presented by staff from the Sacramento District Attorney's Office and Mike Menz from the Roseville Police Department. Menz stated that community law enforcement agencies have joined together to form a task force to identify, utilize and combat high tech crime, such as, cellular phone fraud, theft of computer components, electronic gambling and Internet crime, to name a few. Because our investigators most often access residences alone and during the course of their investigation have the opportunity to see suspicious items such multiple "black boxes" used to receive cable television, or an unusual amount of computer equipment etc... they should be aware that they may have stepped into a dangerous situation. A lot of money is made from these services or items because they are harder to trace, have a high resale value and are often used to keep track of other illegal operations. Prisons are now training their inmates on the use of computer systems and providing them with the technology to go along with it.

All Sacramento County Deputies are required to receive the "High Tech Training" as part of their job. We will be watching this program and gathering information from our other field staff to determine if we should either join the task force or simply establish a contact person when something out of the ordinary is noticed.

In Vallejo, Senior Special Investigator Imelda Ramirez is in the process of training Investigators Leung and Larsen regarding the SFO project. They will work at the airport during her absence beginning in July (when she becomes a mother!)

In Bakersfield, Investigator Joe Roman completed an eight hour class on financial investigations. This case was presented by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

PAGE 3**BENE/OTHER (cont.)**

Fresno's Senior Special Investigator, Phil Connelly discovered that one of his Kings County applicants had an outstanding felony warrant. Phil, accompanied by local police officers, assisted with the warrant service.

Vallejo's Senior Special Investigator, Walt Witt, served two search warrants in Napa, regarding a SSI/Medi-Cal/Vital Stats case. Witt was assisted by Special Agents from the San Francisco SSA-OIG office. The loss through the fraudulent use of a deceased person's identity was \$8,294.17 in State funds and \$15,036.31 in Federal funds. The case will be prosecuted by the Napa County District Attorney's Office. Charges of burglary, forgery, grand theft, false impersonation, and possession of a false birth certificate will be filed. As a result of the search warrant served on the bank, two accounts were seized and the funds returned to the Social Security Administration to cover some of the fraudulent overpayment collected by the subjects.

Special Investigator Jason Lara, arrested a woman on \$35,000 warrants he obtained for criminal violations of California Penal Code sections 114, 115, and 118, all relating to a vital stats case. As a result, the defendant pled guilty to the charges. The Monterey Assistant District Attorney said he expects to receive a jail sentence and that the defendant be deported. Additionally, this case has been forwarded to the Santa Clara Welfare Departments, Fraud Unit regarding fraudulently obtained TANF benefits.

SFO PROJECT

INS staff at the San Francisco International Airport made 43 referrals; nine of these had been terminated from Medi-Cal services, one was active. Cost avoidance was \$2,500.00. Additionally, \$21,178.93 was voluntarily collected from beneficiaries who wished to make repayment of Medi-Cal services.

The US Department of State made 148 referrals; 98 from Manila, 45 from Moscow, and five from Paris. A total of 34 had been terminated from aided services; including 12 from Social Security benefits. Cost Avoidance was over \$140,000.00.

PERSONNEL/MISCELLANEOUS

Senior Special Investigator Dominic Manoli, in conjunction with INS and the Social Security Administration is planning a Fraudulent Document Course for all interested law enforcement personnel. The training will show how to identify a fraudulent green card, false birth certificates and Social Security Fraud.

Senior Special Investigators Irma Hanagan and Mike Estrada received appreciation notes from the Office of Vital Records resulting from a lengthy internal investigation which they conducted over the past several months.

Investigator Ray Wong received a memorandum of appreciation for a presentation he gave to a Medi-Cal Induction Class in Sacramento County. The memo extended the County's gratitude "for all the hard work" that Wong "shared with them." It went on to show appreciation for..... "individuals like yourself who find the time to contribute to the success of our trainees..." (Great job, Ray!)

Henry L. Moody
Page 3

July 91

BENE/OTHER (cont.)

completion of his investigation, Investigator Hulings caused the case to be closed with only a \$225.00 payment by Medi-Cal. The amount billed was \$5,386.00. The hospital has absorbed the remaining balance. The client and her son have returned to Mexico and the child has since died.

SOCIAL SECURITY/MEDI-CAL

Butte County has an epidemic of authorized representatives not paying recipients share of cost. Senior Special Investigator Ray Phillips and Supervising Special Investigator Lisa Vernon met with the District Attorney's Office and they are considering criminal action.

Sacramento Unit I's Senior Special Investigator Eugene Borsoff filed a case in Eldorado County against a recipient who was receiving Medi-Cal benefits and residing in the state of Nevada. The overpayment was in excess of two thousand dollars.

Sacramento Unit I's Senior Special Investigator Dominic Manoli participated in a Shasta County sweep along with county investigators. They spent a day arresting all persons who had outstanding arrest warrants for welfare and Medi-Cal fraud. The sweep was such a success, that another one is being planned.

Supervising Investigator Ron Wells, along with Investigator Robert Butler are networking with three managed care HMOs in an attempt to retrieve medical records and capitation rates.

Investigator Ray Wong completed an investigation into the Petition for Reinstatement requested by a dental provider. In 1989, this provider was convicted of 242 PC, unlawful use of force upon a patient. The provider inappropriately touched a female patient while she was under the influence of Nitrous Oxide. The results of the investigation showed that the provider had satisfied all the terms of his probation with the Dental Board, and Wong had no negative finding at the conclusion of this investigation. It was recommended that the provider's request for reinstatement be granted.

TRAINING/PERSONNEL

Investigator Robert Butler provided training to the Santa Barbara County staff regarding fraud referrals.

Senior Special Investigators Hobert Beneux and Kevin Fite presented Early Fraud and Ongoing Fraud Referral training to a class of 45 Fresno County Eligibility Workers on July 23, 1997.

Contra Costa County, Martinez office, received training regarding DHS Investigations responsibilities, what we do, and what we can do for the Martinez Office.

A meeting was held with the Vallejo Police Department, regarding another Focused Fraud effort. A date has not yet been selected. Another meeting is scheduled for August 20, 1997.

CARR/SFO PROJECT

Forty-seven referrals were completed. Ten were terminated, and two were active M/C (aid code 82 and 14) Estimated cost avoidance: Active Medi-Cal = \$5,000.00.

Embassies

Manila:

Forty referrals; ten active SSI; zero active Medi-Cal. Estimated cost avoidance: Active SSI = \$90,000.00.

CARR/SFO PROJECT (cont.)

Moscow:

Twenty-two referrals; one active AFDC (aid code 30); one active SSI (aid code 60). Estimated cost avoidance: \$14,553.00. (Active AFDC = \$5,553.00; Active SSI = 9,000.00)

Paris:

Two referrals; one active SSI (aid code 10). Estimated cost avoidance = \$9,000.00.

Haiti:

One referral, no record

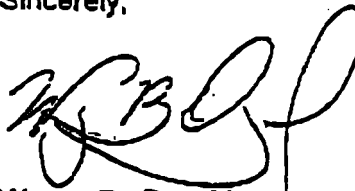
Seoul:

One referral, no record

Total Cost Avoidance CARR/SFO = \$118,553.00

Total Collected and forwarded to Recovery Branch = \$21,652.28

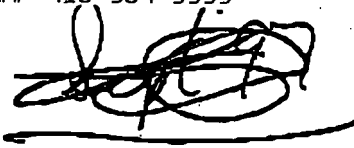
Sincerely,



Wayne B. Duguid
Chief, Investigations Section - North

September 8, 1997

Page 2



Aug 97

BENEFICIARY/OTHER

Senior Investigator Margie Yates filed a criminal complaint against a Medi-Cal recipient. The investigation showed the recipient had paid \$20,000 cash for a BMW automobile and held five unreported active bank accounts. The bank accounts were jointly owned by her and her husband. One account was related to an unreported business. The recipient was arrested by Investigators Yates and Ebert and booked into the Sacramento County jail.

Sacramento's Senior Investigator Darice Harlan identified overpayments totaling \$1,522.00 on two separate cases where the recipients failed to report other health coverage for their children through their father's insurance policies. One case was ultimately discontinued from Medi-Cal and Medi-Cal cards issued for the other case will now be properly coded to identify the insurance plan.

Senior Special Investigator Art Rios, Fresno Investigations Office, filed 14014 Welfare and Institutions charges on a Tulare County recipient who failed to report the father in the home and full-time employment.

Senior Special Investigator Robert Butler filed 14014 Welfare and Institutions charges on a Mono County recipient who used exempt personal property to produce income which resulted in her ineligibility. Investigator Butler also obtained a conviction on a husband and wife who failed to report the ownership of a tire shop. Pursuant to a plea bargain, they were ordered to repay the overpayment of \$2,010.00 and serve a "low-term state prison sentence".

SSI

Senior Investigator Margie Yates met with Social Security staff at their American River office in order to introduce and provide training on our SSI fraud program. Yates stated the staff seemed to be pleased to know that someone was interested in pursuing fraud and would be available for referrals.

CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS

Investigations at San Francisco received 125 referrals from INS, of which 25 were terminated from Medi-Cal. Cost avoidance was \$52,500.00 with \$24,659.00 collected.

Embassies:**Manilla:**

The Manilla Embassy referred 101 individuals, of which 25 were terminated from aided programs. Eight were actively on Medi-Cal. Estimated cost avoidance was \$126,000.00.

Moscow:

The Moscow Embassy referred 20 individuals, of which ten were terminated from aided programs with a cost avoidance of \$44,424.00.

COUNTY NEWS

Sacramento's Senior Investigator Darice Harlan and a Tuolumne County SIU investigator provided joint training on recognizing and referring potential fraud cases to all eligibility workers in the county. Tuolumne is on-line with SAWS and the EWs have been cross-trained as "generic" workers so the fraud training was essential for identifying problem applications and on-going cases.

Ben Thomas
September 1997 Activity Report
Page 4

Sept 97

CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS (cont.)

Embassies:

Manilla:

The Manilla Embassy referred 85 individuals, of which 25 were terminated from aided programs. Estimated cost avoidance was \$93,000.00.

Moscow:

The Moscow Embassy referred 11 individuals, of which two were terminated from aided programs with a cost avoidance of \$35,265.00.

PERSONNEL/TRAINING

Investigators Becky Larsen and Paul Greenhill have begun training at the Alameda County training Center. They will be certified as unarmed self-defense instructors when their training is completed.

Senior Special Investigator, Kevin Fite, provided training to case workers at the Fresno County Children's Services Unit. He covered Fraud Prevention, Other Health Coverage, and intake issues.

Senior Special Investigator Phil Connelly provided training to new Kings County Eligibility workers. He covered Medi-Cal Investigator duties, Fraud Prevention, Ongoing Cases and Overpayment procedures.

Wayne B. Duguid
Acting Branch Chief

cc: David Botelho, Chief - Audits Section - San Jose
Kathleen Christian, Chief - Audits Section - Santa Ana
Nyla Christopher, Chief - Medical Review - North
Evic Correa, Chief - Audits Section - Sacramento
Julio Cueto, Chief - Audits Section - Rancho Cucamonga
Bruce Edwards, Chief - Investigations Section - South II
Patricia Fox, Chief - Audits Section - San Diego
Anna Kiwata, Chief - Audits Section - Emeryville
Alvin Matsuno, Chief - Audits Section - Gardena
Robert Germuso, Chief - Audits Section - Fresno
Dan Giardinelli, Chief - Audits Section - Burbank
Larry Malm, Chief - Investigations - South I
Winston Mesaku, Chief - Medical Review - North
Anna NietoGomez, Chief - Medical Review - South
Thomas Rakela, Chief - Internal Audits
Perry Schulz, Legal Services

Larry Malm, Chief
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November 7, 1997

Oct 97

SSI

The Department of Health Services Recovery referred a case involving a SSI/Medi-Cal recipient who cashed a check made out to the Department of Health Services. Senior Investigator Margie Yates learned that a Medi-Cal provider inadvertently sent his check to the recipient instead of the Department. The recipient waited for two months and then deposited the check into her personal account. When confronted about the check she responded that she was "short of money". This case was referred to the District Attorney's office for prosecution.

CARR/INTERNATIONAL REFERRALS

Investigations at San Francisco received 56 referrals from INS, of which 12 were terminated from Medi-Cal. Cost avoidance was \$15,000. with \$22,115. collected.

Embassies:

Manilla:

The Manilla Embassy referred 114 individuals, of which 15 were terminated. Estimated cost avoidance was \$217,553.

Moscow:

The Moscow Embassy referred 7 individuals, of which zero were terminated. Estimated cost avoidance was \$39,265.

Total Embassies cost avoidance = \$271,818.

PERSONNEL/TRAINING

Chico's Senior Special Investigator Dominic Manoli attended a three-day Spanish course designed especially for law enforcement. He provided handouts to other investigators that had written commands in Spanish to fellow investigators.

On October 22nd, Sacramento's Senior Investigator Rob Ebert conducted a training session for the Sacramento Board of Pharmacy on the Medi-Cal program and how it relates to drug abuse and forged prescriptions.

Senior Investigator Margie Yates, Sacramento Office, provided in-service training for the Mercy Hospital admissions staff in Sacramento. Two separate sessions were conducted in order to also accommodate staff from the American River and San Juan facilities.

Sacramento's Senior Investigators Angel Carrasco and Mike Estrada attended the "Stealing Your Identity" symposium, put on by Department of Health Services, Office of Vital Records, in San Diego. Both investigators said they made good contacts with other people and look forward to implementing some of the techniques they learned.