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Man from Normal Sentenced to 8 ½ Years in Prison for Workers' Compensation Fraud

Longest Sentence for Workers' Compensation Fraud in Illinois Since Anti-Fraud Provisions First Enacted in 2005

CHICAGO – Illinois Department of Insurance (DOI) Director Andrew Boron today announced a recent workers' compensation fraud investigation has resulted in an eight and a half year sentence for a central Illinois man. Elbert Rayford, Jr., of Normal, was sentenced on January 24 to more than eight years in prison for attempting to obtain roughly \$45,000 in workers' compensation benefits through fraud. Rayford, a former employee of T.G. Gum Trucking in Farmer City, misrepresented his medical condition and exaggerated his symptoms to doctors and physical therapists in order to remain off work, collect temporary total disability (TTD) benefits, and receive medical care that was no longer necessary.

"Workers' Compensation Fraud is a crime. We will investigate to determine wrongdoing and then work with law enforcement to make sure perpetrators are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," said DOI Director Andrew Boron.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of Insurance Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit. Video surveillance showed Mr. Rayford engaged in activities that demonstrated his statements to medical providers were untrue. The case was referred to the McLean County State's Attorney's Office for prosecution.

"We appreciate the investigation done by the Illinois Department of Insurance which helped bring about the successful prosecution of this case. The McLean County State's Attorney's Office does not take the attempted misappropriation of public funds lightly and we were pleased to assist in bringing Mr. Rayford to justice. We hope this sentence serves as a deterrent to anyone else who considers committing this type of fraud," said Assistant State's Attorney Jessica Woods.

Eight and a half years is the longest sentence handed down for violating the anti-fraud provisions of the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act. The anti-fraud provisions were first enacted in 2005 and were later amended in 2011. The 2011 amendments included stronger sentencing provisions which applied to this case based on the date Mr. Rayford committed fraud. Rayford, who pled guilty, will also be required to pay \$585.38 in restitution and serve two years of mandatory supervised release as a part of his sentence upon his release from prison.

For more information about Workers' Compensation Fraud, including matters that may involve fraud perpetrated by a claimant, visit the DOI website at <http://insurance.illinois.gov/WCFU/default.asp>. To report an employer, healthcare provider, attorney, insurance agent or company, contact the Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit at 877-WCF-UNIT (877-923-8648).

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