

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Rhode Island

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, December 15, 2022

Office Manager and Her Son Charged in Federal Financial and Health Care Fraud Investigation

PROVIDENCE – The former office manager for a Pawtucket dermatologist's office and her son are facing federal charges following a joint federal and state law enforcement embezzlement, fraud, and health care fraud investigation, announced United States Attorney Zachary A. Cunha.

It is alleged in charging documents that Tianna Keller, 66, of South Easton, MA, used her position as office manager, her authority to sign office documents, and her position as benefits manager to orchestrate schemes to enrich herself, her son, and a friend.

According to court documents, Keller allegedly defrauded the practice of approximately \$490,000. She allegedly did this by giving herself unauthorized salary increases totaling approximately \$185,061; adding family members and a friend to the payroll and providing them with unauthorized gross wages totaling approximately \$46,703; failing to deposit nearly \$108,000 in patient cash payments; issuing dozens of checks payable to herself and others, signing the name of the medical practice's owner without his permission; and using company funds and credit cards as payment for her rent, a daughter's tuition, restaurant, grocery, retail and other personal and travel expenses; and personal services.

Additionally, it is alleged that Keller authorized continued enrollment and payment for family medical insurance coverage for her son, Brandyn Coffman, 30, of New Braunfels, TX, and his family, even after his self-termination as a data clerk at the medical practice, authorizing payment of nearly \$40,000 for this coverage. It is alleged that Blue Cross Blue Shield paid more than \$14,000 in claims submitted by Coffman and his family. It is further alleged that Coffman made false statements to law enforcement, claiming he was unaware of the coverage and that he "didn't even think to use the plan."

The criminal complaint also alleges that Keller, who was receiving temporary disability insurance (TDI) payments at the time of her termination from the medical practice, continued to collect TDI even after she began employment elsewhere; as a result she fraudulently collected \$11,847.

Tianna Keller is charged with conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, wire fraud, and aggravated identity theft; Brandyn Coffman is charged with conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, and making materially false statements to agents.

A federal criminal complaint is merely an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Ronald R. Gendron.

The matter was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration; and the Rhode Island State Police Financial Crimes Unit.

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Topic(s):

Financial Fraud
Health Care Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Rhode Island

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