

PRESS RELEASE

Scammer pharmacist guilty in \$20 million healthcare kickback scheme

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

DOJ's National Fraud Enforcement Division investigates and prosecutes those who commit fraud against the American people.

HOUSTON - A 54-year-old Spring resident has been convicted of conspiracy to pay health care kickbacks.

The jury deliberated for more than a day before returning the guilty verdict against Tronown Thomas following a five-day trial July 11.

Thomas, a licensed pharmacist, owned and operated Rayford ACP Pharmacy in Spring.

At trial, the jury heard Thomas paid over \$2 million in kickbacks to the owner of a Houston clinic in exchange for referrals of patients insured through the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (DOL-OWCP) who had been prescribed high-reimbursement compounded medications.

Thomas subsequently billed the DOL-OWCP for those compounded medications, which were prescribed as part of the illegal kickbacks scheme.

From November 2015 through September 2017, Thomas and Rayford ACP Pharmacy received more than \$20 million in reimbursements from DOL-OWCP.

The defense attempted to convince the jury that Thomas was paying for legitimate marketing services. The jury rejected these arguments and found Thomas guilty.

U.S. District Judge Alfred H. Bennett presided over the trial and set sentencing for Nov. 12. At that time, Thomas faces up to five years in prison and a possible \$250,000 maximum fine.

Thomas was permitted to remain on bond pending that hearing.

The Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General, Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Department of War Defense Criminal Investigative Service conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kathryn Olson and Alexander Alum prosecuted the case.

On April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the [National Fraud Enforcement Division](#), which is laser-focused on investigating and prosecuting those who commit fraud against the American people. The Department's work to combat fraud supports President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within federal benefit programs.

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