

Monthly Columns

by Attorney General Jack Conway



April 2009

Protecting senior citizens and preventing elder abuse remain top priorities for me. That's why I, along with my Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Control Division, am pleased to report that prosecutions of elder abuse, neglect and Medicaid fraud cases quadrupled in 2008. Abusive behavior against senior citizens, or any patient at a Kentucky nursing home, will not be tolerated.

Because of the hard work of our investigators, prosecutors and local law enforcement, last month we were able to convict two Kentucky caregivers working for Community Presence, Inc., a former long term care facility home in Carter County, in connection with the abuse and death of a patient. Both are now behind bars.

Our ongoing investigation into allegations of abuse at the Richmond Health and Rehabilitation Complex (Madison Manor) also resulted in two new indictments in April and a guilty plea from a former nurse's aide on a charge of reckless abuse of an adult.

If you have been a victim of abuse or suspect that a family member, neighbor or loved one is being abused, please contact the Office of the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud/Patient Abuse tip line at 1-877-228-7384.

My office has also increased six-fold the amount of Medicaid Fraud recovery for Kentucky taxpayers. In 2008, we recovered nearly \$24 million in restitution for the Medicaid system.

In the first quarter of this year, we have already recovered nearly four million dollars.

It is gratifying to know that the hard work of our Medicaid fraud and elder abuse investigators is making a difference for senior citizens, as well as taxpayers, in the Commonwealth.

I'm also pleased to report that since January of 2008 when I took office, my Office of Rate Intervention, which serves as a watchdog for consumers relating to utility rates, has saved consumers approximately \$83 million. Be assured we will continue to fight for fair and reasonable utility rates in Kentucky!

Consumer Alert

Cabinet for Health and Family Services Secretary Janie Miller and I have also been warning consumers that scam artists may target a one-time economic stimulus payment being distributed by late May. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides a one-time payment of \$250 per beneficiary to adult Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Veterans Affairs (VA) and Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) beneficiaries.

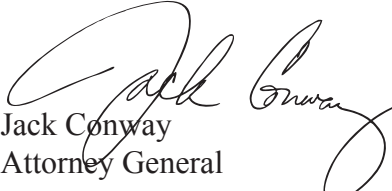
We expect that con artists will employ the same types of techniques as used previously when dealing with government issued payments. Do not fall victim to these criminals and their scams.

Beware of callers who claim to represent the government and claim to have problems depositing your stimulus payment.

Beware of callers who claim that you qualify for the stimulus payment, but additional information is needed. You will NOT be contacted for additional information to receive the payment.

Beware of websites, emails and online advertisements promising access to additional government grants.

If you have received one of these offers related to the one-time economic stimulus payment or believe you have been the victim of a scam, call our Consumer Protection Hotline 1-888-432-9257.


Jack Conway
Attorney General