



PRESS RELEASE

American Health Imaging, Inc. and Scott Arant to Pay Over \$5 Million to Resolve Allegations of Healthcare Kickbacks

Monday, December 2, 2024

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

ATLANTA – American Health Imaging, Inc. (“AHI”) and its former founder and CEO, Scott Arant, will pay the United States and the State of Georgia \$5,250,000 to resolve allegations that they violated the False Claims Act by: (1) providing physicians with meals, tickets to sporting events, and other gifts to induce those physicians to refer diagnostic scans to AHI’s independent diagnostic testing facilities; and (2) entering into above fair market value personal services agreements with referring physicians to induce those physicians to refer scans to AHI.

“The use of inducements to obtain referrals from medical professionals jeopardizes the integrity of our healthcare programs,” said U.S. Attorney Ryan K. Buchanan. “This settlement demonstrates our Office’s commitment to hold accountable providers who ignore Medicare and Medicaid’s strict prohibition against using kickbacks for personal greed.”

“Paying or accepting kickbacks for referrals undermines the integrity of the Medicare program,” said Special Agent in Charge Kelly J. Blackmon of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General (HHS-OIG). “HHS-OIG, in collaboration with our law enforcement partners, remains committed to safeguarding federal health care programs.”

“We won’t allow for any provider to take advantage of a system meant to care for our most vulnerable Georgians,” said Georgia Attorney General Chris Carr. “We will continue to protect the interests of Georgia patients and taxpayers by putting a stop to Medicaid fraud and abuse in our state.”

The government alleges that, between 2011 and 2019, AHI relied on a variety of inducements – sporting events, fishing trips, happy hours, sponsorships of “open houses” at physician offices, and gifts of alcohol, gas cards, and free scans – to generate referrals for diagnostic scans. Many of AHI’s marketing events involved no discernible educational purpose. Examples include tickets to the SEC football championship game, tickets to concerts, monthly dinners with referral sources, and outings to nail salons. The government also alleges that AHI entered into personal services agreements with referring physicians that were above fair market value. Under these agreements, physicians were compensated to interpret the scans that they referred to AHI.

The settlement resolves allegations filed by Tanya Benjamin, a former AHI employee, under the *qui tam*, or whistleblower, provisions of the False Claims Act, which authorizes private parties to sue for false claims on behalf of the United States and share in the recovery. The lawsuit was filed in the Northern District of Georgia and is captioned *United States and State of Georgia ex rel. Benjamin v. Arant et al.*, No 1:15-cv-3242-RWS (N.D. Ga.). Ms. Benjamin will receive a share of the settlement.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Inspector General, and the Georgia State Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Division investigated this case.

The civil settlement was reached by Assistant U.S. Attorney Austin Hall and Georgia State Assistant Attorneys General Sara Vann and Mary Bryan.

The claims resolved by the settlement are allegations only, and there has been no determination of liability.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

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