North Idaho Local

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Former Post Falls dentist sentenced

Darnell Dick guilty of filing false claims for Medicaid funds

BOISE – Former Post Falls dentist Darnell C. Dick, 36, was sentenced in federal court here on Monday to three months in prison and three months of home detention for a scheme to obtain Medicaid funds through false claims.

Dick pleaded guilty to one felony count on April 4 for the claims he made through Darnell Dick Family Dentistry and Northwest Family Dental Inc.

He was also sentenced to three years of supervised release and ordered to pay $9,000 in criminal restitution.

Dick earlier paid $280,000, including $50,000 in Medicaid investigative costs, to settle a pending federal civil lawsuit against him. The civil settlement agreement has not yet been filed.

The United States filed a civil false claims lawsuit against Dick in March 2004, and a federal grand jury returned a criminal indictment against him last June.

Both lawsuits alleged that Dick made multiple false claims to the Idaho Medicaid program between November 1999 and February 2001 for dental services that were not provided to Medicaid patients or that were not provided as billed.

The false claims suit alleged that Dick filed more than 1,000 false, exaggerated or duplicate billings to Medicaid.

The scheme, the suit said, was to submit claims for services provided to Medicaid clients that were not actually provided.

The suit also claimed Dick filed duplicate claims, then failed to refund duplicate payments.

"When discovered, and to conceal the duplicate payments," the suit said, "Dick removed the duplicate payments from the patient accounts."

Specifically, the suit said Dick billed Medicaid for procedures which many times were not done.

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The case was investigated by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Management Services, Surveillance and Utilization Review Unit and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General.

Dick has moved to Canada to his parents' home, a family member said.

Dick sold his business to Michael Boehm over a year ago. Boehm never worked with Dick, however.

Dick's brother, Delwyn, operates a dental office in Coeur d'Alene that isn't affiliated with Darnell's former practices. Delwyn hasn't accepted Medicaid for about 13 years, a family member said.