

# Brighton woman pleads guilty to healthcare fraud offense

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Stephen R. Wigginton, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that Jessica A. Teets, 27, of Brighton, Illinois, pled guilty in the U.S. District Court on October 13, 2015, to the charge that she engaged in a scheme to defraud a health care program.

Sentencing has been set for February 9, 2016, in U.S. District Court in East Saint Louis. Teets will face up to 10 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000, and up to 3 years of supervised release.

During her plea hearing, Teets admitted that she had submitted false and fraudulent bills in relation to her alleged performance of personal assistant services in the Illinois Home Services Program, a Medicaid Waiver Program designed to allow individuals to stay in their homes instead of entering a nursing home. Teets admitted to falsely billing the program between December 7, 2012, and June 30, 2014, claiming that she had rendered personal assistant services to a customer when, in fact, she had not. As a result, Teets improperly billed 111 hours of services and obtained \$1,312.05 in payments for services not performed.

Teets further admitted that her customer was found on July 1, 2014, in an incoherent state and partially covered in dried excrement by a friend checking on her welfare. Emergency responders transported the customer to a hospital and she was hospitalized for multiple days. Teets had not performed personal assistant services for the customer for more than a week prior to July 1, 2014.

This prosecution is part of the fourth wave of the “Operation Home Alone” initiative announced on June 5, 2014, by United States Attorney Stephen R. Wigginton.

The investigation was conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Inspector General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Illinois State Police - Medicaid Fraud Control Bureau, and the Wood River, Illinois Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Adam E. Hanna.