

**August 12, 2022**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: CHICAGO WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY IN SCHEME TO DEFRAUD PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a Chicago woman pleaded guilty in her role to defraud a state program that assists individuals with severe disabilities out of \$115,000.

Gila Sery, 51, of Chicago, pleaded guilty this week in Cook County Circuit Court to a Class 1 felony count of vendor fraud. Sery was ordered to pay \$38,000 in restitution to the state and serve four years of probation. She paid \$20,000 at the time of the plea and will be required to pay the remaining \$18,000 during her probation.

“It is unconscionable anyone would steal from a program that is aimed at empowering individuals with disabilities to live independently and in their homes,” Raoul said. “I will continue to work with the Illinois State Police and state government partners to identify fraud and hold those accountable who steal from taxpayers and our most vulnerable residents.”

According to Raoul, Gila Sery and two additional defendants – Gila’s sister Danielle Sery and her mother Deborah Sery – submitted false time sheets to the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for services provided under the Home Services Program. The program provides services to individuals with severe disabilities, allowing them to remain in their homes and live as independently as possible. Raoul is alleging that Danielle and Deborah Sery submitted fraudulent time sheets to the IDHS claiming they provided services to Gila Sery, who received services through the program. At the time of the scheme, Gila Sery allegedly lived out of state, returning to Illinois for annual re-assessments to fraudulently continue qualifying for the program. In total, the three defendants received a total of approximately \$115,000 from the state for services not provided.

Danielle and Deborah Sery are also being charged for their roles in the scheme, and are scheduled to appear in court on Sept. 1. The public is reminded the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The case was investigated by the Illinois State Police.

“The public must be able to trust state employees and its vendors to provide the services for which their tax dollars pay for,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “The Illinois State Police will continue to work closely with Attorney General Raoul’s office to ensure accountability within all levels of state government.”

Deputy Bureau Chief Elisa Hamilton and Assistant Attorney General Melissa Guske are handling the case for Raoul’s Medicaid Fraud Bureau.