



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Files Suit Against Provider of Services to Disabled Children

BALTIMORE, MD (July 10, 2019) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that his office has [filed suit](#) against the operators of a residential and educational program for disabled students. The complaint seeks to recover damages and penalties from AdvoServ, Inc.; AdvoServ of Delaware, Inc.; AdvoServ Trade, Inc.; AdvoServ Programs, Inc.; AdvoServ Group Home, Inc.; AdvoServ Middletown, Inc.; and Matbe School, Inc.

The defendants, known collectively as “AdvoServ,” operated a residential and educational program for persons with disabilities. Students from Maryland with disabilities and mental health conditions were placed at AdvoServ for treatment and education when their needs could not be met at home and in their local schools.

Despite receiving a minimum of approximately \$230,000 annually to care for each child, the complaint alleges that AdvoServ failed to provide services as follows:

- Failed to provide enough staff to properly supervise, assist, and care for students; sometimes leaving them entirely unsupervised in the group homes in which they lived.
- Failed to provide teachers during the school day.
- Failed to administer medication as prescribed. Many of the students placed at AdvoServ received psychotropic medications to treat mental health conditions. A review of records for just 10 students revealed 717 instances in which medications were not given because AdvoServ did not have the medications on hand.

The complaint also alleges that when AdvoServ reported incidents in which students were restrained or injured, it concealed or attempted to minimize confirmed or alleged staff-on-student assaults. Additionally, AdvoServ allegedly failed to meet the statutory, regulatory, and contractual requirements designed to protect the children placed in their facilities and submitted false or fraudulent claims for payments to the State.

“We allege that AdvoServ failed to deliver services it was hired to provide to the children in its care and that its failures endangered the health and safety of those children,” said Attorney General Frosh.

The case was initially filed by a whistleblower pursuant to the False Claims Act of 2015. In making today’s announcement, Attorney General Frosh thanked Assistant Attorney General Shelly Martin for her work on the case.

