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PRESS RELEASE

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Update: On September 6, 2024, Defendant Asia Williams was sentenced to five years' incarceration, suspending all but six months by Howard County Circuit Court Judge William V. Tucker. Judge Tucker also ordered that Williams be placed on probation for three years and that she is precluded from providing health care services to vulnerable adults or children for the period of her probation.

Attorney General Brown Announces Actions Taken in Multiple Cases of Vulnerable Adult Abuse in Three Maryland Counties

OAG's Medicaid Fraud & Vulnerable Victims Unit secures guilty convictions against caretakers in all cases

(BALTIMORE, MD) April 4, 2024 – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced a string of convictions for abuse of vulnerable adults in Maryland. The cases spanned three jurisdictions including Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Howard County. All the cases were prosecuted by the OAG's Medicaid Fraud and Vulnerable Victims Unit, which focuses on the abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults in Maryland's long-term care and Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) program facilities.

"Families trust that their loved ones are safe and protected in the hands of their care providers. When caregivers violate that trust and put vulnerable adults' health and safety in danger, they will be held accountable," **said Attorney General Brown**. "We are committed to protecting all vulnerable adults, ensuring they are safe, and that their health and wellbeing are never at risk."

Anne Arundel County

In December 2021, an employee at an assisted living facility in the 800 block of Ritchie Highway in Severna Park, viewed a video on her Instagram feed that depicted another employee, the defendant, Jnae Armani Alston, 28, of Baltimore, Maryland, taunting an 80-year-old resident with Alzheimer's in the same assisted living facility where she worked. The employee immediately reported what she saw to her supervisor. That employee later learned of a second video, also posted on Instagram, that showed Alston taunting another resident, an 80-year-old

dementia patient, and pushing the resident to the ground. Both videos were posted on Baltimore Murder Inc., a local Instagram account about crime in Baltimore.

The posts garnered thousands of views before they were taken down. Alston pled guilty to two counts of abuse of a vulnerable adult before the Honorable Stacy W. McCormack of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County. On January 23, 2024, Judge McCormack sentenced Alston to ten years in jail, suspending all but six months, representing a five year, suspend all but three month sentence for each victim, to run consecutively. Judge McCormack also ordered that Alston be placed on five years of supervised probation, during which time she is prohibited from providing direct care to vulnerable adults and from working for any healthcare provider who receives state or federal funds.

“We are grateful that the Attorney General’s office successfully brought charges in these cases of mistreatment in an assisted living facility,” **said AARP Maryland Senior Associate State Director for Advocacy Tammy Bresnahan.** “Sadly, we know that these are not isolated cases. As a state, we must do more to regulate, monitor and hold these facilities accountable for how they treat our seniors. We will continue to work with the General Assembly, the Attorney General’s office and the Moore administration to make sure seniors can live with safety and dignity.”

Baltimore County

Donna Myers, 59, of Baltimore, Maryland, was a community living assistant who provided in-home residential care to a 30-year-old vulnerable adult with intellectual disabilities through a Maryland-based organization supporting individuals with developmental, physical, and mental health disabilities. Donna Myers’ daughter, Allysha Myers, 37, was not an employee. On May 26, 2022, Donna and Allysha Myers drove to a day habilitation program, located in the 1500 block of Sulphur Spring Road in Halethorpe, to pick up the victim and take her home. When the victim resisted being placed in Donna Meyers’ car, Donna Myers physically forced the victim into the car. When the victim continued to resist, she pulled the victim out of the car by her hair and onto the ground. Donna Myers then sat on top of the victim and put her knee on the victim’s chest. Allysha Myers then told her mother that she would handle the situation and forced the victim back into the car. When the victim continued to resist, Allysha Myers got on top of the victim in the back seat and hit the victim with her fist nine or ten times. A van driver for the program witnessed the abuse and intervened.

On October 12, 2023, Baltimore County Circuit Court Judge Nancy M. Purpura sentenced Donna Myers to three years’ incarceration, all suspended, three years’ supervised probation, ordered that Myers be excluded from participating in any healthcare program funded by the federal government, and ordered Myers to participate in an anger management program.

On February 8, 2024, a Baltimore County jury found Allysha Myers guilty of second-degree assault for her role in the incident. On March 25, 2024, she was sentenced to 10 years’ incarceration, with all but 6 months suspended.

Howard County

Asia Williams, 26, of Baltimore, worked at the Linwood Center as a direct support professional providing care for a 21-year-old intellectually disabled woman with autism. The victim reported to her teacher at school that her back hurt, and that Williams had called her names and pulled her down the steps by her hair. The school nurse subsequently performed a physical evaluation and found extensive bruising on her body, abrasion wounds on her abdomen, buttocks, and knees, and that her scalp was red with a small patch of hair missing. When the nurse removed the victim’s ponytail, chunks of hair fell out. A video recording from a camera in the living area of

the victim's apartment, located in the area of North Ridge Road and Town and Country Boulevard in Ellicott City, captured a portion of the assault. The video depicts Williams grabbing the victim by her feet and dragging her off the couch, saying "come on go in the room so I can beat your [expletive]." Williams then drags the victim by her arm towards the bedroom and uses her foot to kick her in her buttock area while the victim is on her hands and knees. While off camera in the bedroom, Williams calls her derogatory names, shouts other expletives, and tells the victim to "stop doing dumb [expletive]." Two large thumps are then heard, the bedroom door slams shut, and Williams leaves the room.

On March 6, 2024, Asia Williams was found guilty of abuse of a vulnerable adult in the second degree and assault in the second degree by Howard County Circuit Court Judge William Tucker following a two-day bench trial. Sentencing is scheduled for May 16, 2024.

If you suspect abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult, you can contact the Medicaid Fraud and Vulnerable Victims Unit at 410-576-6521. You can also email MedicaidFraud@oag.state.md.us or submit a complaint on our website at <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Pages/MFCU/> and one of our investigators will follow up with you.

In making today's announcement, Attorney General Brown thanked Medicaid Fraud and Vulnerable Victims Unit Director Zak Shirley; Assistant Attorneys General Catherine Schuster Pascale, Kelly Casper, and Callie L. Smith; and Investigators Shannon Beatty, Mike Glenn, and Gordon Carew for their work on the case. Attorney General Brown also thanked AARP Maryland for their leadership and commitment to protecting our state's elderly and vulnerable adult community.

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The Maryland Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid Fraud and Vulnerable Victims Unit receives 75 percent of its funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under a grant award totaling \$6,057,128 for Federal fiscal year (FY) 2024. The remaining 25 percent, totaling \$2,019,042 for FY 2024, is funded by the State of Maryland.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age, including 850,000 members in Maryland. With a nationwide presence, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to the more than 100 million Americans 50-plus and their families: health and financial security, and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation's largest-circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org/about-aarp/, www.aarp.org/español or follow [@AARP](https://twitter.com/AARP), [@AARPenEspañol](https://twitter.com/AARPenEspañol) and [@AARPadvocates](https://twitter.com/AARPadvocates) on social media.

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