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PRESS RELEASE

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Court Awards State \$425,940.54 Against Komfort & Kare LLC Assisted Living Program for Housing Medicaid Recipients in Unlicensed Facilities

BALTIMORE, MD (October 18, 2024) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown has announced that the Circuit Court for Baltimore County has awarded the State of Maryland \$425,940.54 in damages against Komfort & Kare LLC, its former owner and manager LaShera White, its former alternate manager and administrator LaSharn Angelita Brown, and related entities for submitting fraudulent claims to the state’s Medicaid program.

Komfort & Kare was an assisted living program that was licensed by the state to provide housing and related services to individuals on Medicaid. After a referral from the Maryland Department of Health, the Office of the Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud and Vulnerable Victims Unit (MFVVU) conducted an investigation into Komfort & Kare. The MFVVU found that Komfort & Kare had housed four Medicaid recipients at locations that had not been inspected, approved, or licensed by the state from at least January 10, 2020, through February 17, 2022, putting the residents’ health and safety at risk. The Medicaid program had paid Komfort & Kare nearly \$142,000 for these services.

“Marylanders on Medicaid are some of the most vulnerable residents of our state. Licensing standards make sure facilities meet minimum requirements to protect their dignity and safety,” **said Attorney General Brown.** “This case shows that our office will step in when companies’ actions threaten marginalized Marylanders’ health and safety, especially during a deadly public health emergency like Covid-19.”

Maryland sued Komfort & Kare, White, and Brown in January 2024, claiming that they had violated the Maryland False Health Claims Act (FHCA) by falsely billing Medicaid for the housing that had been provided in the unlicensed locations. The FHCA prohibits billing Medicaid for false claims – such as when an assisted living program bills Medicaid for services that bypassed laws and regulations, including those that require assisted living programs to house Medicaid recipients in licensed locations. The FHCA allows the courts to award up to three times the amount of the fraudulent claims. The Court granted a default judgment against Komfort &

Kare, White, and Brown and ordered a payment of \$425,940.54, which is triple the amount of damages sustained by the state.

In making today's announcement, Attorney General Brown thanked Assistant Attorney General Jawaria Gilani, Investigator Brittany Leister, and Investigative Auditor David Minzer of the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud and Vulnerable Victims Unit for their work on this case.

The Maryland Office of the Attorney General's 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.

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