

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Union Employee Sentenced For Theft From Health Care Fund

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ROCHESTER, N.Y.-U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul Jr. announced today that Paul Harnas, Jr., 30, of Elmira, NY, who was convicted of conspiring to defraud the Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 267 Insurance Fund, was sentenced to three years of supervised release by Chief U.S. District Judge Frank P. Geraci. The defendant was also ordered to pay restitution totaling \$23,445 and perform 100 hours of community service. In addition, Harnas was directed to pay a 25% penalty on the fraudulently-obtained money to the Local 267 Insurance Fund.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John J. Field, who handled the case, stated that Harnas created fake invoices for dental services that were never provided to him. The defendant then used the invoices to support false claims for reimbursement from the Local 267 Insurance Fund. Harnas also assisted others, including Jared Stevens, Gregory Haller and others who were involved in the scheme, by providing them with fake invoices. In total, Harnas and his co-conspirators fraudulently induced the Local 267 Insurance Fund to pay them \$49,502.51 using this scheme.

Jared Stevens and Gregory Haller have been convicted and are awaiting sentencing.

The sentencing is the culmination of an investigation by Special Agents of the United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Cheryl Garcia of the New York Regional Office, and the New York State Department of Financial Services, Frauds Bureau, under the direction of Superintendent Benjamin Lawskey.

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