

## N E W S L I N E

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### **DWC Suspends 20 Medical Providers for Fraud or Loss of License**

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has suspended 20 more medical providers from participating in California's workers' compensation system, bringing the total number of providers suspended to 197. The providers were suspended for fraud or other criminal actions, or for the loss of their license.

DWC Administrative Director George Parisotto [issued suspension orders](#) against the following providers:

- David Ming Pon, Leesburg Florida ophthalmologist and owner of Advanced Retina-Eye Institute, was found guilty of 20 counts of healthcare fraud in federal court in 2015 for billing the Medicare program for more than \$7 million by fraudulently diagnosing patients with retinal diseases and billing for treatments that were either not medically necessary or never rendered. Pon's license to practice medicine in Florida was revoked in 2016, he was suspended from the Medi-Cal program and his license to practice medicine in California was revoked last year.
- Sameh Abdelmalek, Indio pharmacist, was convicted in Riverside County Superior Court in 2016 for creating and using fraudulent prescriptions to obtain narcotics. His medical license was revoked last year.
- Robert Windsor, Marietta, Georgia physician, was convicted and sentenced to 38 months in federal prison in 2016 for executing a scheme to defraud health care benefit programs, for which he fraudulently obtained approximately \$1.1 million. Windsor surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on the grounds of his criminal conviction.
- The following providers were suspended because their licenses were suspended, surrendered or revoked:
  - Derek Patrick Hughes, Auburn physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 for violating the terms of a ten-year reinstatement probation.
  - Martin Bennett, Encino physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 after he was placed on probation for gross negligence, including prescribing without appropriate examination.

- Manuel Tanguma III, San Marcos physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on grounds of sexual misconduct with a patient, gross negligence and general unprofessional conduct.
- Julie Farrell, Glendale, Ohio physician, surrendered her medical license in 2017 based on grounds of discipline, restriction or limitation for unprofessional conduct imposed by Illinois.
- James Galizia, Blanco, Texas physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on grounds of discipline, restriction or limitation for unprofessional conduct imposed by both Texas and New York.
- Kimberly Le, Carmichael physician, surrendered her medical license in 2017 based on grounds of gross negligence, prescribing without conducting an appropriate prior examination and creation of false medical records.
- Joan MacKenzie, Redondo Beach physician, surrendered her medical license in 2017 based on grounds of gross negligence.
- Sheldon Sevinor, Lynn, Massachusetts physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on disciplinary actions taken by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine.
- Michael Roland Pude Vivian, Ventura physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 after he was placed on probation for using controlled substances and failing to comply with testing requirements.
- Robert Sterner, San Diego physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on grounds of gross negligence, failure to maintain adequate and accurate records, general unprofessional conduct and illness affecting competency.
- Jayshree Vyas, Anaheim physician, surrendered her medical license in 2017 based on grounds that she committed repeated negligent acts in the care and treatment of a patient, and failed to maintain adequate records concerning her care and treatment of that patient.
- John Warbritton III, Oakland physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on grounds of sexual misconduct and unprofessional conduct.
- S.N. Shubhakar, also known as Somwarpet Shubhakar, Porterville physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 based on grounds of unprofessional conduct for failing to enroll in and complete an approved clinical training program.
- Alan Azevedo, Chico physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 due to his illness.

- James Luders, Santa Rosa physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 due to his illness.
- Raymond Rowell, Dublin physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 due to his illness.
- Glenn Strome, San Francisco physician, surrendered his medical license in 2017 due to his illness.

AB 1244, which went into effect January 1, 2017, requires DWC's Administrative Director to suspend any medical provider, physician or practitioner from participating in the workers' compensation system in cases in which:

- The provider has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving fraud or abuse of the Medi-Cal or Medicare programs or the workers' compensation system, fraud or abuse of a patient, or related types of misconduct;
- The provider has been suspended due to fraud or abuse from the Medicare or Medicaid (including Medi-Cal) programs; or
- The provider's license or certificate to provide health care has been surrendered or revoked.

The Department of Industrial Relation's (DIR's) [fraud prevention efforts](#) are posted online, including frequently updated lists for physicians, practitioners, and providers who have been issued [notices of suspension](#), those who have been [suspended pursuant to Labor Code §139.21\(a\)\(1\)](#), and information on [lien consolidations and the Special Adjudication Unit](#).

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The [California Department of Industrial Relations](#), established in 1927, protects and improves the health, safety, and economic well-being of over 18 million wage earners, and helps their employers comply with state labor laws. DIR is housed within the [Labor & Workforce Development Agency](#). For general inquiries, contact DIR's Call Center at 844-LABOR-DIR (844-522-6734) for help in locating the appropriate [division or program](#) in our department.