

## KEEPING YOU INFORMED

### **California Doctor Arrested for Fake COVID-19 Vaccination Card Scheme**

This week the U.S. Department of Justice charged Juli A. Mazi, 41, of Napa, California with one count of wire fraud and one count of false statements related to health care matters. Mazi is being charged as a result of a complaint alleging that Mazi sold purported COVID-19 homeoprophylaxis immunization pellets to members of her family, including for use by minor children. Although the family members did not receive any of the FDA-authorized vaccines, Mazi provided the family with CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Cards that falsely stated the family had received the Moderna vaccine. The initial complaint was subsequently corroborated by other complaints by members of the public, consensual recordings of Mazi's communications with a patient, and other documents and information obtained in the investigation.

This is the first federal criminal fraud prosecution related to homeoprophylaxis immunizations and fraudulent CDC COVID-19 vaccination cards. The fake COVID-19 vaccination cards are said to be in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1035 which provides that "(a) [w]hoever, in any matter involving a health care benefit program, knowingly and willfully— (1) falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact; or (2) makes any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or representations, or makes or uses any materially false writing or document knowing the same to contain any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry, in connection with the delivery of or payment for health care benefits, items, or services, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both."

In May, the United States Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. With this first federal criminal COVID-19 fraud prosecution in California, the U.S. government has now shown that it is committed to combating COVID-19 vaccination fraud. Special Agent Craig D. Fair of the FBI's San Francisco Field Office stated: "As the government continues to work to provide current and accurate information to help slow the spread of COVID-19, the FBI will continue to pursue those who attempt to fraudulently profit from spreading misinformation and providing false documentation."

We encourage you to contact your GRO attorney to discuss any questions or concerns you may have regarding COVID-19 vaccination card compliance.

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