



# Attorney General Doug Peterson

# News Release

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## **Nebraska Therapist Sentenced in Health Care Fraud Case**

U.S. Attorney Deb Gilg and Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson announced that a Lincoln-area woman must repay more than \$192,000 to the state of Nebraska and serve 12 weekends in jail over the next year after pleading guilty to committing health care fraud. Melissa Prentice-Erickson must also serve six months under house arrest and be on probation for 5 years, under a sentence handed down this afternoon by U.S. District Judge John Gerrard.

Prentice-Erickson formerly was a mental health therapist who ran her practice in Aurora, Nebraska. An investigation by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud and Patient Abuse Unit, Magellan Behavioral Health, and the program integrity unit of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services found that Prentice-Erickson submitted 2,614 false claims for payment to Nebraska Medicaid between November 2009 and July 2014. She was paid \$192,761.98 for services she never rendered. A federal grand jury indicted her on 26 counts of health care fraud as a result of her actions.

The case was prosecuted by Mark Collins of the Attorney General's Office and Alan Everett of the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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