



## OIG-supported investigation leads to year-long prison sentence, restitution for LA man

### For Immediate Release

March 23, 2022

LOS ANGELES — A South Bay man was sentenced February 28, 2022, to 12 months plus one day in prison and ordered to pay \$100,919 in restitution for tax evasion.

Jeffrey Lawrence, a.k.a. Jey Lawrence, 59, of Torrance, was sentenced in U.S. District Court, Central District of California, after pleading guilty to a single count of tax evasion stemming from his referrals of prescriptions to TC Medical Pharmacy.

In March 2015, Lawrence entered into an agreement with the pharmacy's owner, Thu Van Le, whereby Le agreed to pay him for the referral of compounded medication prescriptions. Between March and June 2015, Lawrence directed Le to pay more than \$300,000 in referral fees to another person's bank account in order to conceal Lawrence's receipt of taxable income. Lawrence did not file a tax return for the year in which he earned the referral fees that were paid to the other person's account.

After deductions, Lawrence's taxable income from the concealed referral fees was more than \$280,000, and his tax due was more than \$100,000.

For his part in the scheme, Le was sentenced October 4, 2021, to 70 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$10,982,759 in restitution to Tricare and \$768,488 to Amtrak's health care benefit plan. According to an October 2021 press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office, Central District of California, Le's pharmacy submitted more than \$13 million in fraudulent claims for unnecessary compounded medications to Tricare and Amtrak's health care benefit plans.

"We're very proud of our joint efforts with the cross-agency team of investigators and the U.S. Attorney's Office who helped move this case forward," said Tom Hopkins, Special Agent in Charge of Amtrak OIG's Western Field Office. "Our office will vigorously investigate and help bring to justice those who engage in such criminal activity as we work to protect Amtrak funds, American taxpayers, and the traveling public."

The case was investigated by Amtrak OIG, the Defense Criminal Investigation Service, Defense Contract Audit Agency - Operations Investigative Support, FBI, U.S. Department of Labor - Employee Benefits Security Administration, IRS Criminal Investigation, U.S. Office of Personnel Management Office of Inspector General, and the California Department of Insurance. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Aveis prosecuted the case.

Reports of fraud, waste, or abuse; criminal or unethical acts affecting Amtrak's property or operations; or mismanagement in Amtrak programs or operations can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the Amtrak OIG Hotline at 1-800-468-5469 or online at <https://amtrakoig.gov/report-fraud-waste-abuse>.

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