



Butte County

LAND OF NATURAL WEALTH AND BEAUTY

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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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A Chico man was sentenced to state prison yesterday for submitting false claims that he was caring for his disabled parents in their home while in actuality he was incarcerated in Butte County jail. Justin Isaac Woodruff, 28, was employed in the county's In Home Support Services (IHSS) program to take care of his mother and father in their home and submitted time cards supposedly documenting his daily time spent in caring for them.

However, a cross check by the District Attorney's IHSS Fraud Prevention Unit, discovered that at the times Woodruff was claiming he was caring for his parents, he was actually in jail. During four separate incarcerations of Woodruff for various narcotic and failure-to-appear offenses, he signed IHSS timecards claiming he was at home caring for his disabled parents. He defrauded more than \$2000 from the program as a result of his false timecards. Woodruff was sentenced to three years in state prison for the fraud charge plus an additional eight months for a related failure-to-appear charge.

The IHSS program pays for individuals to provide specified and approved personal and domestic care to aged or disabled persons in their homes. The program pays those individuals to provide care according to the number of hours he/she documents as time worked on an IHSS provided timecard. The timecard is certified and signed by the individual worker and then delivered to the county welfare department for payment.

District Attorney Mike Ramsey explained that most IHSS workers are hard working and honest people who do extraordinary work for their clients. However there are some, like Woodruff, who take advantage of the system and claim hours they don't work. It was for this reason the District Attorney established the IHSS Fraud Prevention Unit in partnership with the welfare department. The unit has won an award at the state level for this innovative partnership to fight fraud.