Fraud Fusion Taskforce action leads to jail for former NDIS providers

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Two former National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) providers in Sydney have been sentenced to jail for offences involving $1.2 million in fraudulent claims, including claims for services never provided to participants.

The successful prosecutions were the result of Fraud Fusion Taskforce investigations.

A woman, who operated a cleaning business as a registered provider in Kellyville in Sydney's north-west, was found guilty in the NSW District Court of deliberately claiming payment for household tasks and cleaning services knowing they were never provided to NDIS participants.

The 41-year-old faces a total of three years and six months behind bars, with a non-parole period of one year and five months, after she was found guilty on two counts of 88 fraudulent payment requests valued at more than $1 million, submitted against the plans of 13 NDIS participants between 2018 and 2020.

The woman has also been ordered to repay $442,977 to the Commonwealth.

The NDIA investigated the cleaning business after receiving tip-offs from the public and worked closely alongside partner agency, the Australian Federal Police, to execute a search warrant at the woman's home, seizing documents and electronic devices.

Her sentencing comes after another woman, in a separate case, was earlier this month jailed for three years, with a one-year non-parole period after she was found guilty of dishonestly obtaining a financial advantage from the Commonwealth.

The 48-year-old woman pled guilty in the NSW District Court to two counts of fraud consisting of 8 offences totalling more than $200,000, committed in 2019 and 2020. A reparation order was made for $51,733 to be repaid to the Commonwealth.

The sentencing was the result of an investigation led by the NDIA into two registered NDIS provider businesses operated by the woman in western Sydney in 2020.

An alert was initially triggered by NDIA staff, which led to the investigation of suspected fraudulent practices of the providers claiming for services that were never provided to NDIS participants, most of whom were from non-English speaking backgrounds, and over-charging.

During the investigation the woman left Australia for the United Arab Emirates. She was arrested and charged upon re-entering the country in 2022.

NDIA CEO Rebecca Falkingham said the verdicts showed that providers who set out to exploit the Scheme and participants would be caught.

“These cases involved unscrupulous providers taking advantage of NDIS participants and claiming payments for services that they knew were never provided to them,” Ms Falkingham said.
“While most providers do the right thing, dishonest operators will be brought to account.

“The two cases reflect the Agency’s strong actions to protect the integrity of the Scheme to ensure every NDIS dollar goes towards participant outcomes.

“We have zero tolerance for fraud – and any inappropriate conduct – committed against the NDIS and its participants.

“People with disability and their families deserve to be protected from exploitation, and we are committed in ensuring those expectations are met.”

The Fraud Fusion Taskforce includes 23 agencies and has launched more than 630 investigations since 2022. The Agency’s Crackdown on Fraud program has further strengthened the integrity and security of the Scheme.

Anyone with information about suspected fraud involving the NDIS should contact the NDIS fraud reporting and scams helpline on 1800 650 717 or fill out our online NDIS Fraud reporting form.

The separate matters were prosecuted by the Commonwealth Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP) following a referral from the NDIA.

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