


Minnesota adds Medicaid fraud verification amid alleged \$9B losses

 [foxnews.com/us/minnesota-new-medicaid-fraud-prevention-fix-wont-make-any-difference-former-fbi-agent-says](https://www.foxnews.com/us/minnesota-new-medicaid-fraud-prevention-fix-wont-make-any-difference-former-fbi-agent-says)

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Former FBI agent says Minnesota's new fraud prevention tool won't make 'any difference'

A former FBI agent says that a new fraud prevention tool by the Minnesota Department of Human Services likely won't make a difference in curbing fraud.

Minnesota officials are adding an extra layer of verification to payments from high-risk Medicaid programs, a move one former law enforcement official says won't make "any" difference as federal authorities allege taxpayers in the state have lost more than \$9 billion to fraud since 2018.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) announced an additional layer of verification will be added to payments from Medicaid programs that have a high risk of potential fraud. As part of the audit process, DHS said healthcare company Optum will review payments before they are sent to individual providers.

If signs of fraud are seen in the payment request, it will be forwarded to the Office of Inspector General for further investigation.

Former FBI Special Agent Jonathan Gilliam told Fox News Digital the new layer of verification likely won't make a difference.

TRUMP OFFICIAL FREEZES MILLIONS IN SBA AID TO MINNESOTA, SLAMS WALZ'S POLICIES AS BREEDING 'ENDEMIC' FRAUD

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz speaks at a podium. (Justin Sullivan/Getty Images)

"Putting an extra layer in is not going to help," Gilliam said. "And one layer is not gonna stop any, it may stop one part of the fraud, it's not really gonna make any difference overall."

Gilliam said Democratic Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz committed "at the minimum malpractice" by the sheer amount of fraud that was committed in his state.

The move comes after federal prosecutors announced in mid-December that 14 programs in the state contained fraud, adding those programs cost Minnesota taxpayers \$18 billion since 2018.

First Assistant U.S. Attorney Joe Thompson said during a news conference that half or more of the \$18 billion is suspected to be fraudulent.

MINNESOTA GOP LAWMAKERS CITE CONSTITUTION IN CALL FOR WALZ TO RESIGN OVER FRAUD CRISIS

The sun shines on the Minnesota State Capitol on Monday, Feb. 12, 2024, in St. Paul, on the opening day of the 2024 session of the Minnesota Legislature. (Steve Karnowski/Associated Press)

"When I say significant, I'm talking in the order of half or more. But we'll see," Thompson said. "I think a significant portion."

Thompson revealed during the news conference that six more people were recently charged in connection to an alleged Minnesota housing services fraud.

In one case alone, the defendant is accused of submitting \$1.4 million in fraudulent claims, then using some of the money to buy cryptocurrency. That person fled the country after being subpoenaed, Thompson added.

In one of the larger fraud cases gripping the Land of 10,000 Lakes, the Feeding Our Future scheme cost taxpayers nearly \$250 million, after the program's director approved nonexistent meal services going to poor people.

The current iteration of the Minnesota state flag as seen in St. Paul, March 24, 2022. (Mohamed Ibrahim/Report for America via AP, File)

Criminal defense attorney Sam Bassett told Fox News Digital that someone likely should have detected the fraudulent activity well before it escalated to this point.

"I think it remains to be seen when the details come out, but it does have that tenor about it right now that somebody should have done something sooner. Maybe this should have been detected much sooner to prevent continued violations," Bassett said.

Fox News Digital reached out to Walz's office and DHS for comment.

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