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Media Contacts: ECPR Texas

TXM@ecprtexas.com

(512) 472-9599

Baytown woman sentenced on workers' comp fraud

AUSTIN, Texas— Texas Mutual Insurance Company recently reported that a Travis County district court sentenced Ruth Castilleja of Baytown, Texas, on workers' compensation fraud-related charges.

Castilleja reported an on-the-job injury while working as a phlebotomist for BestCare Laboratory Services LLC in Houston, Texas, and claimed she was unable to work as a result of the injury. Texas Mutual began paying income benefits to her, but then discovered Castilleja was working as a phlebotomist for another company. This type of activity is considered workers' compensation fraud and is often referred to as double-dipping because the claimant collects benefits for being too injured to work while simultaneously being gainfully employed.

The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation, prosecutor in Travis County handled the case. The court sentenced Castilleja to a Class A misdemeanor with 18 months deferred adjudication. She also served 3 days in the Travis County Jail and attended theft school. She will pay \$7,100 in restitution to Texas Mutual.

Texas law requires claimants to contact their workers' comp carrier when they return to work. Left unchecked, double-dipping and other workers' comp fraud can lead to higher premiums for all Texas employers.

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About Texas Mutual Insurance Company

Austin-based Texas Mutual Insurance Company, a policyholder-owned company, is the state's leading provider of workers' compensation insurance. Texas Mutual provides coverage to 43 percent of the market, representing over 76,000

companies, many of which are small businesses. Since 1991, the company has provided a stable, competitively priced source of workers' comp insurance for Texas employers. Helping employers prevent workplace accidents is an important part of Texas Mutual's mission.