

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Group Home Caretaker Sentenced for Assaulting Mentally Disabled and Blind Patient** **Inspector General brings first case to court for criminal prosecution**

Washington, DC - Inspector General Charles C. Maddox and United States Attorney Roscoe C. Howard, Jr. announced today that Defendant Winfred Lee of Washington, DC was sentenced in D.C. Superior Court on two misdemeanor counts, simple assault and attempted possession of a prohibited weapon. The Honorable Erik P. Christian imposed concurrent 180 day sentences on the two charges. The Court suspended 60 days of the sentence and ordered the Defendant to serve 1 year of probation following his release from incarceration. Lee, a worker in a group home for the mentally and physically disabled, was found guilty on September 24, 2001 of beating a mentally disabled, blind resident with a venetian blind rod and with his fist at the group home on May 21, 2001.

The case was prosecuted jointly by the OIG's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) and the U. S. Attorney's Office. The MFCU, which was created in March of 2000, handled this case as part of an effort called the Guardian Angel Project (GAP). GAP is a comprehensive program designed to deter and, when appropriate, punish health care providers who intentionally abuse or neglect vulnerable patients under their care. Among the institutions covered by GAP are nursing homes, group homes for the mentally retarded, and facilities for the mentally ill. These institutions are a main focus of the MFCU's outreach and education efforts. MFCU investigators and attorneys make presentations to industry and professional groups covering topics such as detecting abuse, prompt and accurate reporting of abuse, and the most effective ways to work with law enforcement agencies. Also, emphasis is placed on outreach and education efforts aimed at senior citizen groups, consumer groups and ombudsmen for the elderly.

The case was jointly prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Alexis Taylor and Kimberly Knur.