

U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS RELEASE:

LAB OWNER RECEIVES 57- MONTH PRISON SENTENCE AND AGREES TO FORFEIT \$2.8 MILLION

R. Alexander Acosta, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, and Jonathan I. Solomon, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced the April 18, 2007 sentencing of defendant **Marcelo de Jesus Serrano**, a laboratory owner, who previously pled guilty in connection with a \$2.5 million Medicare billing fraud scheme involving two medical laboratories.

United States District Court Judge Marcia G. Cooke sentenced Serrano to a 57-month term of imprisonment for his role in the health care fraud scheme. Pursuant to his plea agreement with the government, Serrano agreed to forfeit in excess of \$2.8 million in cash and stock holdings, along with three Mercedes Benz automobiles and a motorcycle.

The case stemmed from a fraudulent clinical laboratory billing scheme that netted Serrano and his co-conspirators more than \$2.5 million in Medicare payments from 2003 through 2005. Serrano operated two clinical labs, Biocyte Laboratories, Inc and Washington Medical Laboratory, Inc., formerly located in Hallandale Beach, Florida. To conceal his ownership interests in the labs, Serrano incorporated the labs with the State of Florida in the names of fake owners, including a deceased nursing home patient. Serrano then submitted in excess of \$5 million in claims to the Medicare program for fraudulent clinical laboratory testing.

Mr. Acosta commended the investigative efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This case was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney William J. Parente Jr.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida at www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at www.flsd.uscourts.gov or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.

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