

Oregon sues Oracle over Medicaid system

Software giant says they will stop hosting Medicaid enrollment at end of month

By GOSIA WOZNIACKA
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Oregon has filed a new lawsuit against Oracle Inc. saying the company is planning to pull the plug on hosting the state's Medicaid system, which could jeopardize health insurance enrollment and re-enrollment for thousands of low-income Oregonians.

According to the lawsuit, Oracle promised the state it would renew the contract for hosting Medicaid enrollment, but it suddenly notified officials earlier this month that hosting would terminate at the end of February. The state says this will bring enrollment in the Oregon Health Plan, the state's version of Medicaid, to a grinding halt; it wants a judge to force Oracle to continue working with the state.

Oregon's Medicaid system, which runs on Oracle technology, processes 26,000 low-income people each week, according to the state's complaint. People can sign up for Medicaid year-round.

The lawsuit was filed in Marion County Circuit Court on Friday. Oracle was the main technology contractor for the botched Cover Oregon health insurance exchange, which also included a Medicaid enrollment system.

Oracle disputes Oregon's characterization of the disagreement. In a letter to Oregon officials, Oracle's senior vice president and general counsel Dorian Daley said Oracle made no binding promises to Oregon and the hosting contract does not contain a provision to renew it. The letter was provided by company spokeswoman Deborah Hellinger.

In the letter, Oracle blames the Oregon Health Authority, which oversees Oregon's Medicaid program, for not having a contingency plan.

Oregon Health Authority officials did not respond to repeated calls for comment about why Oregon didn't find a different hosting

company, knowing that litigation between the state and Oracle was imminent. State officials also did not explain how long it would take to find a new hosting service or what manual processing of Medicaid enrollment would look like if Oracle terminates the hosting.

In April, Oregon ditched the Oracle-built exchange and switched to the federal exchange, HealthCare.gov, to sign up Oregonians for private health insurance. When the federal portal finds that a person may be eligible for Medicaid, it sends the information back to the state. HealthCare.gov does not handle Medicaid enrollment because each state is responsible for managing its own Medicaid enrollment system.

Oregon hoped to salvage parts of the Oracle technology to build its Medicaid site, but officials later decided against working with Oracle. The state is now adopting technology from Kentucky for Medicaid enrollment — but that won't be completed until December. In the meantime, the state has continued to use Oracle's software and hosting to run Medicaid.

Oracle's letter says the com-

pany no longer wants to do business with Oregon because of what it believes are absurdities in the state's legal actions. The state has previously sued the Redwood City, California-based company over the Cover Oregon debacle, claiming that Oracle officials lied, breached contracts and engaged in "a pattern of racketeering activity."

In its complaint, Oregon seeks a permanent injunction to bar Oracle from doing business with the state in the future.

This, the letter from Oracle states, "is simply incompatible with continuing to ask Oracle to enter into new agreements with the State."

Oracle says the state's "defaming" of Oracle and its work directly clash with its claim that the Oracle system is indispensable to Medicaid's functioning.

"Now you are demanding that Oracle keep that very same system — the system that the State has been telling the world does not work — up and running because it is critical to signing up thousands of Oregonians for Medicaid," the letter states.

Outgoing governor commutes sentence

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — As one of his final acts in office, Oregon's outgoing governor, John Kitzhaber, commuted the prison sentence of a young inmate convicted of attempted murder.

Sang Dao, 25, sentenced to more than 12 years in prison, will be released next month, more than three years early.

Dao earned a bachelor's degree from Portland State University while behind bars, and Kitzhaber's fiancée, Sylvia Hayes, spoke at his graduation ceremony last summer.

Hayes was at the center of the ethics controversy that prompted Kitzhaber to step down effective Wednesday. She has been accused of using their relationship to land work for her consulting firm.

Kitzhaber has denied wrongdoing on both their parts.

The commutation, obtained by The Associated Press, was signed Tuesday, a day before Kitzhaber handed power to his successor, Kate Brown. Brown signed the document in her former role as secretary of state.

It was not immediately clear why Kitzhaber granted Dao clemency.

Dao will leave prison March 17. Department of Corrections records show his earliest possible release date had been in November 2018. His attempted murder conviction included unlawful use of a weapon and assault.

In earning his degree while at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility, however, Dao "took advantage of all the benefits and the programs that we offered, and he made the most of them," spokesman C.J. Drake said.

"His conduct and his reformation while he was with us was exemplary," Drake said.

Hayes, speaking at the graduation ceremony, told the graduates "education is something no one can take from you."

Dao was transferred in November to a state prison in Salem when he aged out of the youth correctional system.

7-week-old baby dies of starvation; parents arrested

Associated Press

GRANTS PASS — An Oregon couple involved in online pornography has been arrested on charges of murder by abuse after an autopsy determined their 7-week-old son died of starvation.

Douglas County sheriff's deputies said Wednesday that Stephen Michael Williams Jr., 26, and Amanda Marie Hancock, 21, were arrested Tuesday at their home in the small town of Glendale.

Prosecutors allege the couple showed extreme indifference to human life by causing the death of Data Toria Hancock through neglect and maltreatment by failing to provide adequate food and medical care.

The two were to be arraigned Wednesday. Conviction of murder carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison.

The couple's 2-year-old son was taken into protective custody, Deputy Dwes Hutson said.

An affidavit filed by deputies says the parents told investigators they did pornography, which involved the mother self-lactating while others paid to watch online.



This Tuesday booking photo shows Stephen Williams Jr., 26 and Amanda Hancock, 21, of Glendale. Williams and Hancock were arrested Tuesday at their home in Glendale on charges of murder by abuse after their seven-week-old baby boy, Data Hancock, was determined to have died of starvation.

The two also said they fed the baby milk several times each day but never took him to a doctor, despite signs he was losing weight.

"Stephen and Amanda both admitted there was no prenatal care, and they didn't go to any doctor's appointments after Data was born," the probable-cause affidavit said.

Williams told investigators he thought the baby had lost some weight, but he didn't call the doctor "because that was Amanda's responsibility," the document said. "This was the agreement they had made."

Deputy District Attorney Shannon Sullivan said attorneys would be appointed by the court

"Stephen and Amanda both admitted there was no prenatal care, and they didn't go to any doctor's appointments after Data was born."

— Probable-cause affidavit

for Williams and Hancock. Otherwise, Sullivan said she had no comment.

Glendale is a town of about 875 people in southwestern Oregon timber country, which has struggled economically since national forest logging was sharply reduced in the 1990s to protect fish and wildlife. Leading employers include a wood products mill and public schools.

The affidavit says an ambulance was called to the couple's home Jan. 22 to treat an infant who had stopped breathing. Efforts to revive the baby were unsuccessful.

An autopsy performed at the state medical examiner's office determined the baby died of starvation, authorities said.

Corrections

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY Some sun
FRIDAY Mostly cloudy with a shower
SATURDAY Partly sunny
SUNDAY Plenty of sunshine
MONDAY Plenty of sunshine

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST
52° 37° 51° 32° 45° 26° 44° 21° 45° 26°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST
54° 36° 53° 32° 50° 26° 47° 22° 48° 24°

ALMANAC
PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday
TEMPERATURE
HIGH 53° LOW 29°
Yesterday 53° 29°
Normals 47° 30°
Records 76° (1902) 6° (2006)
PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.76"
Normal month to date 0.74"
Year to date 1.48"
Last year to date 2.17"
Normal year to date 2.12"

HERMISTON
through 3 p.m. yesterday
TEMPERATURE
HIGH 55° LOW 28°
Yesterday 49° 29°
Normals 71° (1930) 5° (1929)
PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.61"
Normal month to date 0.62"
Year to date 1.05"
Last year to date 1.58"
Normal year to date 1.90"

SUN AND MOON
Sunrise today 6:52 a.m.
Sunset tonight 5:27 p.m.
Moonrise today 7:03 a.m.
Moonset today 6:54 p.m.

First Full Last New
Feb 25 Mar 5 Mar 13 Mar 20

REGIONAL FORECAST
Coastal Oregon: Rather cloudy today; a passing shower across the north.
Eastern Washington: Mostly cloudy today.
Eastern and Central Oregon: Partly sunny today. Partly cloudy tonight, except mostly cloudy across the north.
Cascades: A blend of sun and clouds today. Partly cloudy tonight.
Western Washington: Rather cloudy today into tomorrow with a shower. Saturday and Sunday: mostly sunny.
Northern California: Low clouds followed by some sun at the coast today; partly sunny elsewhere.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	55	43	c	53	37	c
Baker City	54	31	pc	49	26	c
Bend	54	28	pc	48	26	pc
Brookings	63	45	c	60	44	pc
Burns	57	28	pc	49	25	pc
Enterprise	51	32	pc	43	30	c
Eugene	57	41	c	55	36	pc
Heppner	53	36	c	48	33	pc
Hermiston	54	36	c	53	32	c
John Day	55	34	pc	46	29	pc
Klamath Falls	58	27	pc	52	24	pc
La Grande	54	35	pc	49	31	c
Meacham	48	31	pc	44	27	c
Medford	60	35	pc	56	31	pc
Newport	55	44	c	54	40	c
North Bend	56	42	c	56	39	pc
Ontario	60	37	pc	57	34	c
Pasco	56	34	c	56	32	c
Pendleton	52	37	pc	51	32	c
Portland	55	42	c	53	37	c
Redmond	54	26	pc	51	25	pc
Salem	57	41	c	55	36	c
Spokane	47	31	c	48	29	c
Ukiah	51	33	pc	45	30	c
Vancouver	55	40	c	53	36	c
Walla Walla	51	39	pc	50	34	c
Yakima	57	32	c	57	31	pc

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	46	31	c	40	32	r
Hong Kong	71	65	pc	72	66	c
Jerusalem	43	34	sh	42	39	sn
London	48	38	r	45	35	r
Mexico City	75	46	pc	76	46	pc
Moscow	31	24	pc	39	28	c
Paris	47	40	pc	46	35	c
Rome	55	39	s	54	42	s
Seoul	45	24	s	48	33	s
Sydney	81	70	sh	81	71	r
Tokyo	52	38	s	49	37	s

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Friday
Boardman	WSW 4-8	W 6-12
Pendleton	W 6-12	W 7-14

UV INDEX TODAY
0 2 2 2 0 0
8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme
The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary: A snowstorm will affect part of northern New England today as arctic air extends from the Midwest to the Deep South. Some snow will spread to the northern Plains. Much of the West will be sunny and warm.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 85° in Thermal, Calif. Low -33° in Crane Lake, Minn.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Fri.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	68	36	s	67	37	pc
Atlanta	29	17	s	40	31	c
Atlanta City	17	2	s	18	14	s
Baltimore	16	-2	c	18	7	s
Billings	55	33	s	44	24	c
Birmingham	33	18	s	43	34	c
Boise	57	34	pc	52	31	c
Boston	28	3	sf	20	4	pc
Charleston, SC	37	16	s	39	27	s
Charleston, WV	8	-10	sf	19	12	c
Chicago	5	-7	pc	18	16	sf
Cleveland	4	-11	sf	13	9	pc
Dallas	63	49	s	71	61	c
Denver	58	30	s	53	22	c
Detroit	6	-11	sf	11	10	s
El Paso	77	48	s	75	50	pc
Fairbanks	22	1	pc	26	11	c
Fargo	6	2	pc	26	2	c
Honolulu	83	70	pc	79	68	sh
Houston	63	53	s	74	62	c
Indianapolis	8	-5	c	20	17	c
Jacksonville	45	22	s	47	33	s
Kansas City	21	17	pc	41	31	pc
Las Vegas	77	50	pc	77	49	pc
Little Rock	33	20	s	41	37	i
Los Angeles	70	54	pc	67	54	pc
Louisville	11	-5	pc	26	24	c
Memphis	27	20	pc	39	36	i
Miami	59	39	s	65	59	s
Millwaukee	4	-5	pc	17	16	sf
Minneapolis	7	0	pc	26	14	sn
Nashville	19	7	pc	30	28	sn
New Orleans	54	40	s	66	58	c
New York City	22	5	sf	21	12	pc
Oklahoma City	56	39	s	58	43	pc
Omaha	22	15	c	40	25	c
Philadelphia	20	3	sf	19	9	s
Phoenix	83	55	s	82	54	c
Portland, ME	32	10	sn	22	-3	pc
Providence	25	3	sf	18	4	s
Raleigh	21	5	s	26	17	s
Rapid City	47	27	pc	45	22	sf
Reno	67	34	pc	60	30	pc
Sacramento	67	47	pc	70	43	pc
St. Louis	17	11	pc	30	26	sn
Salt Lake City	61	37	s	52	33	pc
San Diego	67	58	pc	66	56	pc
San Francisco	65	50	pc	66	51	pc
Seattle	54	44	c	52	40	c
Tucson	81	51	s	78	50	c
Washington, DC	20	4	c	22	13	s
Wichita	40	23	pc	51	31	pc

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.