

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI



JIM HOOD
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Meridian Caregiver Indicted for Exploitation of Vulnerable Person

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Jackson, MS—A Meridian resident is facing charges of exploitation of a vulnerable person, announced Attorney General Jim Hood today.

Cedric Blanchard, 28, of Meridian turned himself in to investigators with the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit today following recent indictment by the Lauderdale County Grand Jury for one count of exploitation of a vulnerable person.

The indictment alleges that Blanchard, while employed at the East Mississippi State Hospital as a direct care worker, obtained the debit card of one of the facility's patients. Blanchard is accused of offering to buy small items for the patient, then also drawing out sums of cash from an ATM machine for his own use. Blanchard is alleged to have withdrawn more than \$500 over a three day period from the one patient's account.

Blanchard was booked into the Lauderdale County Jail. Bond was not immediately set. If convicted, he faces a maximum fine of \$10,000 and/or 10 years incarceration. As with all cases, the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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