

# NDOJ

## OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL Nevada Department of Justice



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **GROUP HOME OPERATOR SENTENCED ON CHARGE OF INVOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER**

**Las Vegas**--Attorney General George J. Chanos announced today that Las Vegas Irma Chiang Rafael (age 40) was sentenced today by Clark County District Court Judge Nancy M. Saitta on charges of involuntary manslaughter. The charge carried a maximum sentence of 4 years in prison and a fine of \$5,000.00. Rafael was sentenced to 12 months to 30 months and she must serve a minimum of 12 months in the Nevada State Prison before she would be eligible for parole.

The case was prosecuted by the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU).

Irma Rafael was originally charged with separate counts of elder neglect resulting in death and involuntary manslaughter. On August 15, 2005 she pleaded to the single count of involuntary manslaughter.

The case resulted from an investigation by Las Vegas Metro P.D.'s homicide detail, the Las Vegas Fire and Rescue Department, the Clark County Coroner's Office and the MFCU. The case focused on Rafael's operation of a group home on Holly Hill Avenue. It was alleged the home did not have an approved fire sprinkler system in operation when a fire broke out during March 2004. Two residents died as a result. It was also alleged that Ms. Rafael had left the home and the residents alone without a caregiver present when the fire broke out.

"The State of Nevada requires qualified caregivers to be in the group homes whenever there are residents present", said Chanos. "Those laws are designed to protect against the exact type of tragic results that occurred from this fire."

During sentencing Judge Saitta commented that Rafael showed an utter disregard for the most vulnerable people in her care that needed her protection the most.

Anyone suspecting the abuse or neglect of an elderly person may report it to the MFCU at (775) 684-1191 (Carson City) or (702) 486-3420 (Las Vegas); or to the Aging Services Division (775) 688-2964 (Reno), (775) 687-4210 (Carson City) or (702) 486-3545 (Las Vegas); or to any local law enforcement agency. Medicaid fraud and elder abuse or neglect information can be found on the Attorney General's web site at <http://ag.state.nv.us>.

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