

IN THE MATTER OF THE

MARYLAND INSURANCE
ADMINISTRATION

v.

CHRISTOPHER DEMARCUS HAWKINS
P.O. Box 267
Patuxent River, MD 20670

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CASE NO. : MIA-2025-08-039

Fraud Division File No.: R-2024-3085A

ORDER

This Order is issued by the Maryland Insurance Administration (the “MIA”) against Christopher DeMarcus Hawkins. (“Respondent”) pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Ins. Art. §§ 2-108, 2-201, 2-204 and 2-405 (2017 Repl. Vol. & Supp.) for the violations of the Maryland Insurance Article identified and described.¹

I. RELEVANT MATERIAL FACTS

1. Respondent had a valuable personal property insurance policy (“VPP”) with United Services Automobile Association (“USAA”), an authorized insurer. The policy was in effect from July 11, 2023 to July 11, 2024.
2. On February 17, 2024, Respondent notified USAA via mobile application that on February 9, 2024, upon returning to his office after working out and getting dinner, he discovered his locker open and two necklaces with pendants missing. USAA opened a claim.
3. Respondent uploaded images of the jewelry along with his claim. A USAA representative examined the images provided by Respondent. The USAA representative noticed the timestamp showed the images were taken on February 17, 2024, which is after the February 9, 2024 theft

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all statutory references in this Order are to the Insurance Article of the Maryland Code.

reported by Respondent. The USAA representative also learned that Respondent had filed several prior claims, mainly for the loss of jewelry, under other VPPs.

4. Due to the unusual circumstances of this claim and Respondent's claim history, particularly his history of claims for the loss of valuable personal property ("VPP"), USAA referred Respondent's claim to its Special Investigations Unit ("SIU").

5. On February 20, 2024, a USAA investigator reviewed the images Respondent uploaded on February 17, 2024 when he initially reported his loss. According to the metadata associated with those images, the USAA investigator determined that the images were taken with an "iPhone 15 Pro Max @ W Charlotte St, Norfolk, VA 23510 (Which is the Attain Downtown apartments)." The USAA investigator determined that the pictures were taken at 450 Boush St., Unit 525 Norfolk, VA 23510-1368; the Attain Downtown Apartments.

6. On February 21, 2024, a USAA investigator interviewed Respondent regarding his claim. During the interview, Respondent provided the following details to the USAA investigator: He is a Chief in the United States Navy and is currently stationed at the Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command ("NMRTC") located in Patuxent River, Maryland. He has an office on base located in the clinic where there is heavy and constant foot traffic and a cleaning crew comes in daily during the evening hours.

7. On February 9, 2024, he claimed his jewelry was stolen from the locker which was locked in his office while he was at the gym and getting a bite to eat. When he returned to his office, his office door was shut. Once inside his office, he discovered his locker opened and his jewelry missing; He reported the incident to his command but did not report it to security or other staff. No police report was filed. Respondent stated that he used his own iPhone 15 Promax to directly upload photographs of the jewelry subject to the claim. Respondent stated that he typically stays

on base at the Navy Lodge, which is next door to where he works, but sometimes on weekends, holidays, or when he has time off, he stays with a friend at 450 Boush Street, Unit 525, Norfolk, Virginia. This is the location where the photos were taken with his phone.

8. During the recorded interview, the USAA investigator explained the concept of metadata and revealed that the metadata associated with the photographs Respondent uploaded to USAA in support of his claim indicate that the photos were taken by Respondent on February 17, 2024, which is 8 days after Respondent claimed the jewelry had been stolen.

9. After being confronted with the metadata associated with the photographs that he uploaded, Respondent admitted the following to the USAA investigator:

- The pictures of the jewelry that he claimed was stolen on February 9, 2024 were taken by him on his phone on February 17, 2024 in Norfolk, Virginia. Therefore the photos were taken after he claimed the incident occurred.
- He had the stolen jewelry in his possession on February 17, 2024 when he reported that the jewelry had been stolen. Therefore, no theft had occurred.
- He has no idea what happened to the items he claimed were stolen between February 17, 2024 and February 21, 2024 (the day of his recorded statement to USAA);
- He maintained that the items of jewelry were missing and he did not have them; “What I will say is uhm I made a mistake.” and “Uhm can I also cancel this claim ...?” was the statement he provided to the USAA investigator.

10. On February 29, 2024, USAA sent Respondent a denial letter regarding his claim, which stated:

Your claim for two missing necklaces isn't covered because you knowingly misrepresented and concealed material facts in this claim. Based on the facts and policy information below, United Status Automobile Association (USAA) will make no payments on this claim.

On 2/17/24, you reported that two chains went missing from your locker 2/09/24.

On 2/17/24, you submitted photographs of the missing items. The photographs contained digital properties showing they were taken on 2/17/24 after the loss and after you reported them missing to USAA.

On 2/21/24, you reaffirmed that the necklaces were missing. USAA discussed with you that you had possession of the necklaces after the loss had occurred and you could not provide a reasonable explanation as to why you claimed the necklaces were missing.

USAA's denial letter referred you to the pertinent insurance policy language pertaining to "concealment or fraud."

11. Based on the circumstances of your claim, USAA reported the matter to the Administration pursuant to § 27-802(a)(1) of the Insurance Article, which provides:

An authorized insurer, its employees, fund producers, or insurance producers, ... who in good faith has cause to believe that insurance fraud has been or is being committed shall report the suspected insurance fraud in writing to the Commissioner, the Fraud Division, or the appropriate federal, State, or local law enforcement authorities.

The MIA's Investigation

12. A MIA investigator reviewed a copy of the documents and files provided by USAA. Those records supported the details listed in the "Facts" section of this Order.

13. On November 20, 2024, an MIA investigator spoke with Respondent to discuss the claim he filed with USAA on February 17, 2024. The investigator asked Respondent if he could briefly describe the details regarding his loss. During that discussion, Respondent maintained that his property was stolen on February 9, 2024 and that on February 17, 2024, he took screenshots of the property and uploaded them along with his claim. Respondent advised the reason he waited until February 17, 2024 to file a claim is because he wanted to go to Norfolk, where he often stays, to

see if he accidentally left his property there. The investigator advised Respondent the circumstances surrounding his loss seems suspicious. Respondent replied; “Can’t explain it, just have to own it!”

II. VIOLATION(S):

14. In addition to all relevant sections of the Insurance Article, the Administration relies on the following pertinent sections in finding that Respondent violated Maryland’s insurance laws:

§ 27-403

It is a fraudulent insurance act for a person:

...

(2) to present or cause to be presented to an insurer documentation or an oral or written statement made in support of a claim ... with knowledge that the documentation or statement contains false or misleading information about a matter material to the claim.

§ 27-408(c)

(1) In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed under this section, on a showing by clear and convincing evidence that a violation of this subtitle has occurred, the Commissioner may:

(i) impose an administrative penalty not exceeding \$25,000 for each act of insurance fraud; and

(2) In determining the amount of an administrative penalty, the Commissioner shall consider:

- (i) the nature, circumstances, extent, gravity, and number of violations;
- (ii) the degree of culpability of the violator;
- (iii) prior offenses and repeated violations of the violator; and
- (iv) any other matter that the Commissioner considers appropriate and relevant.

15. By the conduct described herein, Respondent knowingly violated § 27-403(2) when he claimed to USAA that jewelry was stolen when, in truth and in fact, he had that jewelry in his possession as evidenced by the photographs that he submitted in support of his claim. As such, Respondent is subject to an administrative penalty under § 27-408(c).

III. SANCTIONS

16. Insurance fraud is a serious violation, which harms consumers in that the losses suffered by insurance companies are passed on to consumers in the form of higher premiums. The Commissioner may investigate any complaint that alleges a fraudulent claim has been submitted to an insurer. *See* §§ 2-201(d)(1) and 2-405.

17. Having considered the factors set forth in § 27-408(c)(2), the MIA has determined that \$500.00 is the appropriate penalty.

18. Administrative penalties shall be made payable, by check or money order, to the Maryland Insurance Administration and shall identify the case by number (R-2024-3085) and name (Christopher DeMarcus Hawkins). Payment of the administrative penalty shall be sent to the attention of: Shanice Deramus, Fiscal Division, Maryland Insurance Administration, 200 St. Paul Place, Suite 2700, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Unpaid penalties will be referred to the Central Collections Unit for collection.

19. This Order does not preclude any potential or pending action by any other person, entity or government authority, regarding any conduct by Respondent including the conduct that is the subject of this Order.

WHEREFORE, for the reasons set forth above, and subject to your right to request a hearing, it is this 26th day of August 2025, **ORDERED** that:

Christopher DeMarcus Hawkins shall pay an administrative penalty of Five-Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) within 30 days of the date of this Order.

MARIE GRANT
Insurance Commissioner
(signature on original)

signature

Associate Commissioner
Fraud and Enforcement Division

RIGHT TO REQUEST A HEARING

Pursuant to § 2-210 of the Insurance Article and Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 31.02.01.03, an aggrieved person may request a hearing on this Order. This request must be in writing and received by the Commissioner within thirty (30) days of the date of the letter accompanying this Order. However, pursuant to § 2-212 of the Article, the Order shall be stayed pending a hearing only if a demand for hearing is received by the Commissioner within ten (10) days after the Order is served. The request shall include the following information:

- (1) the action or non-action of the Commissioner causing the person requesting the hearing to be aggrieved;
- (2) the facts related to the incident or incidents about which the person requests the Commissioner to act or not act; and
- (3) the ultimate relief requested.

The failure to request a hearing timely or to appear at a scheduled hearing will result in a waiver of your rights to contest this Order and the Order shall be final on its effective date. Please note that if a hearing is requested on this initial Order, the Commissioner may affirm, modify, or nullify an action taken or impose any penalty or remedy authorized by the Insurance Article against the Respondent in a Final Order after hearing.

The written request for hearing must be addressed to the Maryland Insurance Administration, 200 St. Paul Place, Suite 2700, Baltimore, Maryland 21202, Attn: Clerk – Office of Hearings.