

# DOJ Speeds Review of Benefits Fraud Whistleblower Complaints

June 1, 2026

On May 27, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice (“DOJ”) announced reforms aimed at accelerating its review of False Claims Act (“FCA”) whistleblower complaints alleging fraud against federally funded, state-administered benefits programs (such as Medicaid, SNAP, and Unemployment Insurance).<sup>1</sup> In announcing the reforms, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division, Brett A. Shumate, stated, “By accelerating review of qui tam complaints alleging benefits fraud, we can more rapidly identify and disrupt emerging schemes, strategically deploy enforcement resources to recover taxpayer money, and strengthen the government’s broader fight against fraud.”

The change may have a significant impact on healthcare companies and other firms involved in federally funded, state-administered benefits programs. As discussed below, DOJ’s announcement signals that FCA investigations in this space will proceed on a more accelerated pace, and may also portend a greater likelihood of parallel investigations by multiple government agencies.

The initiative reflects the Trump administration’s continued focus on fraud enforcement, following [recent launches of the National Fraud Enforcement Division \(“NFED”\) and Task Force to Eliminate Fraud](#)<sup>2</sup>, [the West Coast Health Care Fraud Strike Force](#)<sup>3</sup>, and the Fraud Oversight through Careful Use of Statistics (FOCUS) initiative for data miners filing qui tam complaints<sup>4</sup>. The announcement comes amid continued changes to DOJ’s fraud-enforcement structure. Recent reporting indicates that DOJ has

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Civil Division Moves to Fast-Track Benefits Fraud Enforcement,” (May 27, 2026), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/civil-division-moves-fast-track-benefits-fraud-enforcement>.

<sup>2</sup> “DOJ Establishes National Fraud Enforcement Division to Centralize and Expand Fraud Enforcement,” (Apr. 13, 2026), <https://www.debevoise.com/insights/publications/2026/04/doj-establishes-national-fraud-enforcement-div>.

<sup>3</sup> “DOJ Launches New West Coast Strike Force to Target Healthcare Fraud,” (May 4, 2026), <https://www.debevoise.com/insights/publications/2026/05/doj-launches-new-west-coast-strike-force-to-target>.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Civil Division Announces FOCUS Initiative for Data Miners Filing Qui Tam Complaints,” (Apr. 30, 2026), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/civil-division-announces-focus-initiative-data-miners-filing-qui-tam-complaints>.

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returned market integrity and consumer fraud teams back to the Criminal Division's Fraud Section following a brief stint within the NFED.<sup>5</sup>

**Changes in Qui Tam Review Process.** Pursuant to the May 27 memorandum, DOJ's Civil Division will prioritize review of qui tam complaints that allege fraud involving federally funded, state-administered benefits programs. The Division aims to complete that review within 60 days and no more than 120 days. At the conclusion of that review, DOJ will determine whether to:

- Permit the relator (whistleblower) to proceed with the action and to assume primary responsibility for litigating it, subject to the government's ongoing supervision;
- Conclude that additional government investigation is required; or
- Seek dismissal of the complaint because the allegations lack sufficient specificity or are legally deficient.

If DOJ determines that additional investigation is required, such investigation should be completed in a 120-day period, with prompt issuance of subpoenas or Civil Investigative Demands and early witness interviews.

New cases involving federal benefits fraud will be promptly referred to DOJ's Criminal Division and/or the NFED for evaluation and discussed by relevant government agencies to assess potential administrative action, including payment suspension.

**Implications for Companies.** Companies with exposure to federally funded benefits programs—including those that manage billing, eligibility workflows, documentation, data analytics, staffing, or vendors for covered programs—should expect:

- **Accelerated timelines.** Given DOJ's intention to complete review of benefits-related qui tam complaints within 60 to 120 days, any company involved in such a complaint is likely to face accelerated investigation, DOJ intervention, and resolution. Companies should be prepared to conduct internal investigations as promptly as possible in order to make informed decisions about whether to cooperate with or challenge government requests. Companies should also make personnel available for interviews at the earlier stages of the investigation.

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<sup>5</sup> Benn Penn, "DOJ Restores Financial Crime Team in Latest Fraud Office Shakeup," BLOOMBERG L. (May 28, 2026), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/doj-restores-financial-crime-team-in-latest-fraud-office-shakeup>.

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- **Greater exposure to parallel proceedings.** Early referrals to criminal, civil, and administrative authorities are likely to increase the risk that qui tam complaints will generate investigations and other proceedings outside of the civil FCA process.
  - **Heightened importance of compliance.** Companies participating in or otherwise exposed to federally funded benefits programs should expect close scrutiny of claims, certifications, reporting mechanisms, documentation practices, and program oversight. It would be prudent to put in place documentation policies and other procedures that would enable companies to quickly respond to the government's requests, which is likely to be expected given the ambitious investigative timelines set out in the memorandum.

**Conclusion.** DOJ's announcement signals the Trump administration's continued focus on fraud enforcement involving federal funds. Federal benefits-related whistleblower complaints are likely to move through the enforcement pipeline quicker than in the past. Companies involved in such programs should anticipate accelerated scrutiny and consider reviewing their compliance programs, internal reporting mechanisms, and investigative procedures.

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Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.



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