

*Jackie Lacey*  
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NEWS RELEASE

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**Rehab Center Owner Charged With  
Sexual Assault, Healthcare Fraud**

The founder of a Los Angeles drug and alcohol treatment facility has been charged with sexually assaulting nine patients as well as running a \$175 million fraudulent healthcare billing scheme, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Christopher Bathum (dob 9/22/61) was charged in two separate cases that were filed over the past several days. He is charged in case BA451669 with three counts of sexual penetration by a foreign object, two counts of forcible oral copulation and one count each of forcible rape and rape of an intoxicated person. He also faces 27 counts of sexual exploitation and 12 counts of furnishing controlled substances.

Bathum and his chief financial officer, Kirsten Wallace (dob 4/3/73) are each charged in case BA451664 with 31 counts of money laundering, eight counts of grand theft, six counts of identity theft and five counts of insurance fraud.

Bathum and Wallace are scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow in Department 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center.

Between 2013 and 2016, Bathum is accused of sexually assaulting female patients, and in some cases, providing them with drugs as they struggled to overcome their addiction. Several of the assaults happened at the facilities that he ran, prosecutors allege.

The ages of the victims range from their 20s to their early 30s.

Bathum owned and operated Community Recovery of Los Angeles and other entities in Southern California and Colorado.

The two defendants allegedly obtained multiple health care insurance policies for their clients, using their personal identifying information and falsified the clients' circumstances to obtain the policies. The patients were unaware that policies had been issued in their name, prosecutors added.

Bathum and Wallace also are accused of billing for former clients after their treatment ended while those clients were still working at CRLA and no longer receiving treatment.

Between June 2012 and December 2015, Bathum and Wallace are accused of fraudulently billing an estimated \$175 million. In most instances, bills were sent for services allegedly never provided.

About \$44 million was paid out by five insurance companies, prosecutors said.

If convicted as charged in the healthcare fraud case, Bathum and Wallace each face up to 53 years in state prison. He faces up to life in prison if convicted in the sexual assault case.

The case remains under investigation by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation and the California Department of Insurance.

### **[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.