

Cofece finds evidence of illegal agreements in newborn medical tests

Mexico City, June 6, 2024. The Investigative Authority (IA) of the Federal Economic Competition Commission (Cofece or Commission) initiated an ex officio investigation (under file IO-003-2023) to determine whether absolute monopolistic practices were conducted in **the public procurement of supplies needed for neonatal metabolic screening tests.**

Neonatal metabolic screening is a laboratory test performed on newborns to detect hereditary and congenital conditions and diseases so they can be treated promptly. Since 1998, it is a **mandatory** test for all newborns in Mexico, therefore the existence of collusive agreements in the procurement of these tests would severely impact the general population, as it directly affects the quality of life of children and even the infant mortality rate in Mexico.

The Investigative Authority of the Commission has up to **120 business days** counted from the beginning of the investigation, which can be extended up to four times, to conclude its inquiry. If illegal agreements are confirmed, those responsible will be called to a trial-like procedure to present their defense. **The initiation of the investigation does not constitute any prejudgment.**

If the existence of illegal agreements is proven, the economic agents could be fined up to 10% of their revenues, and the individuals involved could face **up to 10 years in prison**. It is important to mention that those who have participated or assisted in such conduct and **provided valuable information for the investigation could become eligible for the benefits of the Cofece's Immunity and Reduction of Sanctions Program .**

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The Federal Economic Competition Commission safeguards competition and free market access.

Through its work, it seeks better conditions for consumers, that more services are supplied with higher quality, and that there is a "level playing field" for companies.