



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI STATEMENT ON PRISON SENTENCE OF CITY HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION ELIGIBILITY
SPECIALIST CONVICTED OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FRAUD TOTALING MORE THAN \$250,000**

Mark G. Peters, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI") issued the following statement on a former City Human Resources Administration ("HRA") employee sentenced today to three years in federal prison for fraudulently issuing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits totaling more than \$250,000 in exchange for cash. U.S. District Judge Kevin T. Duffy imposed the sentence in federal court in Manhattan. The defendant, HARRY FLETCHER, pleaded guilty in April 2016 to Solicitation and Receipt of Bribes. DOI partnered with the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York in the investigation and prosecution of this case.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "Today's sentencing demonstrates the necessity of investigating and prosecuting public assistance crimes to the fullest extent of the law. City workers who steal public funds for their own benefit weaken government and cripple the lives of individuals who rely on this assistance. DOI will continue to work with its law enforcement partners to pursue these crimes."

FLETCHER, 46, of the Bronx, N.Y., was an HRA Eligibility Specialist receiving an annual salary of approximately \$41,470. He began work at HRA in January 1990, and resigned from his position in June 2016 as a result of this investigation.

According to DOI's investigation, between 2009 and 2015, FLETCHER fraudulently issued SNAP benefits, also referred to as food stamps, to several individuals without obtaining, reviewing, or recording critical supporting documentation from the applicants – documentation that should have been used to determine the applicant's eligibility and benefit level. FLETCHER worked with two associates who fraudulently received these benefits and who recruited other interested individuals to whom FLETCHER issued fraudulent food stamp benefits in exchange for a kickback. FLETCHER fraudulently processed these individuals' SNAP applications, resulting in their being issued electronic benefit transfer ("EBT") cards which he fraudulently loaded with public assistance funds. In return, these individuals periodically paid FLETCHER between \$100 to \$200, and in some instances monthly, to continue the scheme and fraudulently receive the benefits. The fraudulent EBT cards were sent to locations in the Bronx controlled by FLETCHER's associates, who then delivered these cards to the individuals, some of whom were residents of other New York State counties.

DOI Commissioner Peters thanked Preet Bharara, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York; Diego Rodriguez, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's New York Office; HRA Commissioner Steven Banks, and their staffs, for their cooperation and assistance in this investigation.

These investigations were conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for HRA, specifically Assistant Inspector General Christos Hilas and Deputy Inspector General John Bellanie, under the supervision of Inspectors General Milton Yu and Shelley Solomon, Special Associate Commissioner Susan Lambiase, Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Investigations Michael Carroll, and First Deputy Commissioner Lesley Brovner; and with assistance from DOI's NYPD Squad.

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Assistant United States Attorney Robert Boone, from the office of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District, is prosecuting the case in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

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