



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of New York*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**NEW YORK CITY EMPLOYEE AND HUSBAND INDICTED  
FOR THEFT OF \$2.5 MILLION FROM ASSIGNED COUNSEL  
FUND**

**ROSLYNN R. MAUSKOPF**, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, **ROSE GILL HEARN**, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation, and **GLEND A PAPPILLION**, Acting Special Agent-in-Charge, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, New York, announced today the indictment of **RAIMMA TAGIEV**, also known as "Rachel Tagiev," and her husband, **YAN BLINDER**, also known as "John Blinder," on mail fraud and money laundering charges in connection with the theft of \$2.5 million from the Criminal Justice Coordinator's Office, Assigned Counsel Plan.

The federal indictment charges TAGIEV and BLINDER with conspiracy to commit mail fraud and a money laundering conspiracy, in violation of Title 18, U.S.C., Sections 371 and 1956. If convicted on the money laundering charge, the defendants each face a maximum sentence of twenty years imprisonment, three years supervised release, a \$5,000,000 fine, and forfeiture of \$3,000,000. The mail fraud conspiracy carries a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment, three years supervised release, a \$250,000 fine, and restitution of \$2.5 million.<sup>1</sup>

The indictment charges that between February 2000 and August 2003, fraudulent checks totaling more than \$2.5 million were issued by the City of New York, Criminal Justice Coordinator's Office, Assigned Counsel Plan, to fictitious payees. The Assigned Counsel Plan is responsible for processing invoices for attorneys, experts and service providers for indigent litigants in Criminal Court and Family Court proceedings. The \$2.5 million in payments were ostensibly made in connection with expert services provided to indigent Family Court clients and Criminal Court defendants. In fact, no services were provided, the payees were fictitious, and the checks were sent to mail drops and cashed by the defendants.

TAGIEV was employed as a clerk at the Assigned Counsel Plan Office located at 253 Broadway in Manhattan, and was responsible for entering information into the Assigned Counsel Plan concerning payees, including the names of the attorneys, experts and other service providers, and the amounts to be paid. The indictment alleges that the fraudulent checks were mailed to several different commercial mail drops in New York City, which were opened by an

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<sup>1</sup> The charges contained in the indictment are merely allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

accomplice recruited by BLINDER using false identification. BLINDER picked up the checks from the mail drops and cashed them using an unlicensed check casher.

“These defendants are charged with plundering critically needed funds for the poor,” stated United States Attorney **ROSLYNN R. MAUSKOPF**. “This case reflects both our commitment to prosecuting fraud that corrupts our municipal government, and our determination to recover the funds needed to provide essential services to our city’s residents.”

**ROSE GILL HEARN**, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation, stated, “These kind of cases are of paramount importance because the City can ill afford to lose \$25, let alone \$2.5 million. Anyone who engages in any type of criminal activity that rips off the City should know that DOI will make every effort possible to ensure that you are not only prosecuted but make the City whole. We intend to have Ms. Tagiev and Mr. Blinder repay every nickel of the \$2.5 million they stole from City tax payers.”

**GLENDIA PAPPILLION**, Acting Special Agent-in-Charge, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, stated, “IRS Criminal Investigators uncovered this scheme because of our expertise in following the money trail in financial investigations. With the major financial crisis New York City faces, it is reassuring to know that the IRS Criminal Investigators saved the City a significant amount of money by uncovering this illegal scheme.”

The defendants will be arraigned before United States District Judge I. Leo Glasser this afternoon at 2:30 p.m., at the U. S. Courthouse, 225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York.

The government’s case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Burton Ryan, Patricia Pileggi and Charles Kelly.

**The Defendants:**

Name: RAIMA TAGIEV

DOB: 1/18/75

Residence: 139 Ryan Road, Marlboro, NJ

Name: YAN BLINDER

DOB: 7/8/60

Residence: 139 Ryan Road, Marlboro, NJ