



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation  
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**DOI ARRESTS 15 CURRENT AND FORMER CITY EMPLOYEES ON CHARGES OF “DOUBLE-DIPPING”  
–City defrauded of nearly \$80,000–**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), announced today the arrests of 15 current and former City employees, most of whom were City “seasonal” employees, who fraudulently obtained a total of approximately \$79,840 in unemployment insurance payments. DOI’s investigation found these defendants falsely claimed to the New York State Department of Labor (“DOL”) they were unemployed, when in actuality they were working for a City agency and receiving City wages. The individuals are charged with stealing amounts that range from \$3,107 to \$14,432. The City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (“DCAS”) reimburses DOL for unemployment insurance benefits paid to City employees and did so in these cases. DOI investigated these cases with the assistance of DCAS, DOL, and the office of New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr., which is prosecuting the cases.

Since 1998, and including these arrests, DOI has arrested 121 City employees on charges of illegally collecting more than \$430,000 in unemployment insurance benefits. The majority of those arrests have been of “seasonal” employees who work for City agencies for part of the year. They are entitled to collect unemployment insurance benefits when not working during the off-season but may not lawfully claim and collect unemployment benefits while actively employed and collecting City wages.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, “Falsely claiming unemployment while collecting a City salary is a crime that saps the City’s limited resources, especially during these tough economic times. As New York City’s watchdog, DOI protects taxpayer funds. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to expose and stop double dippers.”

New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., said, “In this economy, unemployment benefits are essential to the families of New Yorkers who have been laid off or find themselves in between jobs. By fraudulently accepting unemployment benefits while working for the City of New York, these defendants violated the public trust.”

Today’s arrests include individuals who worked for the City Department of Parks and Recreation (“DPR”), Human Resources Administration (“HRA”), Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (“DOITT”), New York City Police Department (“NYPD”), Board of Election (“BOE”), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), Department of Sanitation (“DSNY”), and the Department of Transportation (“DOT”). Nine of the individuals arrested today currently work for the City and their cases will be referred to the appropriate agency for disciplinary action.

Each of the 15 individuals arrested is charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Following are brief descriptions of the charges. In each case, the defendants falsely claimed to DOL they were unemployed, DOL paid unemployment benefits, and DCAS reimbursed DOL for each amount disbursed:

- ORQUIDIA WADE, 30, of Brooklyn, is charged with falsely certifying she was unemployed between January and November 2009, when in fact she was working as a DOITT call center representative

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during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$14,432 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

- EARLEY WATFORD, 45, of Brooklyn, is charged with falsely certifying he was unemployed between May 2009 and July 2010 when in fact he was working as a DPR seasonal aide during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$8,506 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

WATFORD has been working as a City seasonal aide since July 2007, currently works at DPR, and receives \$14.98 an hour.

- WILLIAM LENNON, 51, of Manhattan, is charged with falsely certifying he was unemployed between August 2009 and February 2010 when in fact he was working as a DOHMH Public Health Advisor during that period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$6,974 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

LENNON began working for DOHMH as a Public Health Advisor in November 1993 and currently receives hourly wages of \$20.68 in that position.

- JOHN BLACK, 54, of Manhattan, is charged with certifying he was unemployed between November 2009 and May 2010 when in fact he was working as an HRA Job Training Participant and, then, as a DPR seasonal aide, during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$6,242 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

- CALVIN WARD, 39, of Queens, is charged with falsely certifying he was unemployed between March and December 2010 when in fact he was working as a DOT Assistant City Highway Representative during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$6,075 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

WARD began working DOT in March 2008 and is an Assistant City Highway Representative receiving an hourly wage of \$22.03.

- TONIA WALKER, 32, of Brooklyn, is charged with certifying she was unemployed between May and September 2010 when in fact she was working as an HRA eligibility specialist during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$5,950 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

WALKER began working at HRA in May 2010, currently is an eligibility specialist, and receives an annual salary of approximately \$36,602.

- BEVERLY ATKINS, 45, of Brooklyn, is charged with falsely certifying she was unemployed between November 2009 and February 2010 when in fact she was working as a DOITT call center representative during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$4,158 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

ATKINS began working at DOITT in November 2009, is currently a call center representative, and receives an annual salary of approximately \$32,761.

- MARGARET SCALISCE, 62, of Staten Island, is charged with falsely certifying she was unemployed between May and September 2009 when in fact she was working as a DPR seasonal aide during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$4,108 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

SCALISCE has been working as a City seasonal aide since June 2000, currently works at DPR, and receives \$14.98 an hour.

- ESTHER CAMACHO, 55, of Manhattan, is charged with falsely certifying she was unemployed between September 2009 and February 2010, when in fact she was working as a NYPD school crossing guard during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,798 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

CAMACHO began working as a school crossing guard in April 2000 and currently receives hourly wages of \$12.90 in that position.

- JOHN MCCLAIN, 53, of Brooklyn, is charged with falsely certifying he was unemployed between January and June 2010 when in fact he was working as a DSNY Job Training Participant during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,485 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.
- ARTHUR WANNER III, 35, of Queens, is charged with falsely certifying he was unemployed between October 2009 and January 2010 when in fact he was working as a DPR seasonal aide during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,366 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

WANNER has been working as a City seasonal aide since August 2004, currently works at DPR, and receives \$15.78 an hour.

- DELORES GRAHAM, 55, of the Bronx, is charged with falsely certifying to DOL she was unemployed between May and September 2009 when in fact she was employed as a DPR Job Training Participant during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,266 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.
- ANTHONY HALL, 25, of the Bronx, is charged with falsely certifying he was unemployed between May and July 2010 when in fact he was working as a BOE clerk during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,192 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.
- JOYCE BENSON, 46, of the Bronx, is charged with falsely certifying she was unemployed between May and October 2009 when she was in fact working as a DPR Job Training Participant during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,179 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.
- SANDRA DIAZ, 39, of the Bronx, is charged with falsely certifying she was unemployed between September 2008 and August 2010 when in fact she was working as a DPR seasonal aide during that time period. As a result of those misrepresentations the defendant illegally collected approximately \$3,107 in unemployment insurance benefits, according to the criminal complaint.

DIAZ has been working as a City seasonal aide since July 2007, currently works at DPR, and receives \$14.98 an hour.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr., New York State DOL Commissioner Colleen C. Gardner, DCAS Commissioner Edna Wells Handy, DPR Commissioner Adrian Benepe, HRA Commissioner Robert Doar, DOITT Commissioner Carole Post, NYPD Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, BOE President Juan Carlos Polanco, DOHMH Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley, DSNY Commissioner John J. Doherty, and DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, and their staffs, for their assistance in the investigation.

Assistant District Attorney Maurice A. Johnson of the New York County District Attorney's Office has been assigned to the prosecution of these cases, under the supervision of Daniel G. Cort, Chief of the District Attorney's Public Integrity Unit.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

*DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. 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.*

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