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Department of Investigation  
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**DOI INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARRESTS OF THREE TAXI MEDALLION AGENTS  
ON CHARGES OF EVADING TAXI RULES AND REGULATIONS**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced the arrests today of three taxi medallion agents on charges of forging taxi driver signatures on Medallion Lease Agreements and submitting those agreements to the New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC). The TLC requires taxi agents to maintain current Medallion Lease Agreements with taxi drivers, and to produce these agreements upon TLC's request. DOI initiated its investigation after the TLC reported to DOI that it requested medallion taxi agents to produce their leases and the TLC noted discrepancies on some of the submitted agreements. The office of New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., is prosecuting the case.

TLC Rule 58-21(h) requires that taxicab-operating leases must be in writing and signed by the owner and the leasing driver(s), and a copy of the lease must also be provided to the leasing driver(s). The TLC rule is designed to ensure there is a written contract governing the terms of the relationship between the taxi driver and medallion agent, safeguarding taxi drivers from unlawful treatment.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "These arrests show that forgery is not a detour around the TLC's rules and regulations."

TLC Commissioner David Yassky said, "Taxi drivers work long hours in demanding jobs, and they have the right to be paid fairly. These arrests are the product of hard work by the TLC's enforcement unit, which over the past two years has secured over \$100,000 in restitution to drivers who have been cheated by fleet owners. We encourage drivers to report all violations of TLC leasing rules to our enforcement division, and drivers can rest assured we will follow up."

According to the criminal complaints, in February 2012, TLC updated its Rulebook and directed all agents to produce any and all lease agreements and car purchase agreements the agents had possession of on or after January 1, 2010. As a result of DOI's investigation the following three taxi medallion agents were each charged with varying counts of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies, and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison and an E felony is punishable by up to four years in prison:

- HEATH CANDERO, 26, of Manhattan, N.Y., who is President and Secretary of Heath Management Corp. in Manhattan, was charged with submitting to TLC medallion lease agreements in June 2012 that contained signatures of two taxi drivers who stated they had not seen the agreements or signed the documents. DOI's investigation also found the defendant prepared the leases subsequent to the dates noted on the documents.
- MAGDY M. ELGHONAMI, 59, of Levittown, N.Y. who is the President of Mag Taxi in Long Island City, N.Y., was charged with submitting to TLC medallion lease agreements in February 2012 that contained signatures of two taxi drivers who stated they had not seen the agreements or signed the documents. DOI's investigation also found the leases were backdated and the defendant signed some of the drivers' names on the leases.

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- ANGEL OSWALD, 70, of Staten Island, N.Y., who is the Controller of On Our Way in Brooklyn, N.Y., was charged with submitting to TLC medallion lease agreements in March 2012 that contained forgeries, specifically three taxi drivers stated they had not signed and / or initialed the agreements. DOI's investigation also found the leases were backdated and that the defendant signed some of the drivers' names on the leases.

A taxi medallion agent is an individual or business entity licensed by the TLC to operate or facilitate the operation of one more taxicabs on behalf of the taxicab owners. A medallion is the numbered plate issued by TLC and affixed to the outside of a taxicab as evidence that the taxicab has been licensed to operate as a medallion taxicab.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked TLC Commissioner David Yassky and New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., and their staffs, for their assistance in this investigation and prosecution.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for TLC.

Assistant District Attorney Amy Justiniano of the New York County District Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Bureau is assigned to the prosecution of these cases.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. 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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