



Department of Investigation *Press Releases*

DOI Arrest DHS Temp Worker

In "No-Show" Scheme At Bronx Emergency Unit

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2000 EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the arrest of JAMES SHAVIS, a temporary contract employee formerly assigned as a data entry clerk at the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Bronx Emergency Assistance Unit (EAU), for stealing more than \$4,600 in City funds through a "no-show" payroll scheme.

Commissioner Kuriansky said, "For more than 6 months last year, SHAVIS was a "phantom employee at the EAU, concocting phony time sheets, collecting weekly paychecks " and never once setting foot in the office!"

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, DOI recently initiated an investigation after DHS reported that SHAVIS, an employee of Tri-State Employment Services, Inc., had submitted time sheets for work performed at the Bronx EAU in July and August 1999, although Tri-State's contract to provide temporary services to DHS had expired on June 30, 1999.

DOI's investigation revealed that DHS had actually terminated SHAVIS on January 27, 1999, because of repeated verbal confrontations with other EAU employees, but that he had never notified Tri-State of his dismissal. Instead, between February 2 and August 10, 1999 SHAVIS allegedly faxed 28 fraudulent time sheets to the company, each indicating that he had worked a 40-hour week at the Bronx EAU.

In carrying out his scheme, it is alleged, SHAVIS would, on a weekly basis, either use a time sheet containing the forged signature of a DHS supervisor or take a time sheet containing the legitimate signature of a DHS supervisor, remove the time and date, and make a photocopy of the altered sheet. He would then complete the time and leave section of the altered sheet to falsely reflect that he had worked at the Bronx EAU during the covered period. Tri-State, in mistaken reliance on the sham time records, would thereafter submit invoices to DHS seeking payment for the work SHAVIS had purportedly performed at the EAU. As a result, SHAVIS illegally received a total of \$4,600 in salary payments between January 28 and August 10, 1999.

SHAVIS, 27, of Manhattan, N.Y. , was charged with 1 count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, 28 counts of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, and 28 counts of Forgery in the Second Degree. If convicted, he faces up to 7 years in prison.

The investigation was conducted by Gerard Hoey, DOI's Inspector General for DHS, and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Benjamin Defibaugh and Confidential Investigator Nanci Chalkin.

The office of New York County District Attorney Robert Morgenthau is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Christina Berninger is handling the matter.