



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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HPD Attorney Arrested for Falsifying DOI Background Questionnaire
-Failed to Note He Had Been Convicted Twice of Felony Drug Charges-

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the felony arrest of Victor E. Ekperigin for allegedly falsifying pre-employment paperwork qualifying him for his City position as a staff attorney with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

Ekperigin, 47, of Cortlandt Manor, New York, was charged with two felony counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing, and faces up to seven years in prison, if convicted. He also faces disbarment from the New York State Bar.

DOI began its investigation in July 2002 after the agency's own Background Investigations Unit found Ekperigin uncooperative with the background investigation process, said Commissioner Gill Hearn. As a matter of course, new city employees who work in sensitive positions must undergo a background investigation to determine their suitability for employment with the city.

Ekperigin, who had been hired as an HPD staff attorney in March 2002, canceled several prearranged appointments to drop off necessary documents, according to investigators. When Ekperigin finally showed up for an appointment, investigators were unable to capture his fingerprints on a computer or an old-fashioned inepad. The investigators suspected Ekperigin had placed a foreign substance on his hands in an attempt to mask his fingerprints. In late July 2002, Ekperigin resigned from HPD.

Investigators for DOI's Inspector General for HPD continued to look into Ekperigin's background and determined he had been convicted of felony drug charges in 1989 and 1992 and had served time in Virginia and New Jersey prisons. Those convictions were not listed on Ekperigin's background questionnaire as is required. Instead, his resume stated he was in private practice.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked HPD Commissioner Jerilyn Perine and Deputy Commissioner/General Counsel Matthew Shafit for their cooperation in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by Brian D. Foley, DOI's Inspector General for HPD/OIG, Frank Sinatra, First Deputy Inspector General and DOI staff members, including Special Investigator Christopher Adams and Confidential Investigator Maliaka Williams.

Hope Korenstein of the office of New York County District Attorney Robert Morgenthau is prosecuting the case.

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To make a complaint about someone ripping off the city, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.*