



Department of Investigation

Press Release

Release #036-99

DOI ARRESTS HRA "ELIGIBILITY" SPECIALIST FOR TAKING BRIBE TO OPEN FAKE WELFARE CASE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 1999 -- EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of DELPHINA BRONSON, an Eligibility Specialist for the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA), for accepting \$600 in payoffs to open a fraudulent welfare case. Unbeknownst to BRONSON, the intended recipient was a DOI undercover agent.

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, DOI initiated an investigation after receiving information that BRONSON was using her position as an Eligibility Specialist to open phony welfare cases for individuals willing to pay a fee. At the time, BRONSON was assigned to HRA's Rider Job Center in the Bronx.

As part of its investigation, DOI sent an undercover investigator, posing as a welfare recipient and wearing a concealed recording device, to meet with BRONSON at the Rider Job Center. In telephone conversations and meetings, BRONSON allegedly agreed to open a bogus welfare case for the undercover in exchange for a \$300 payment. For an extra \$300, BRONSON further agreed to provide the undercover with a fraudulent home address where the benefits could be sent and to add two fictitious children to the recipient's family so as to increase the amount of welfare she would receive.

BRONSON, 29, of West 129th Street in Manhattan, has been employed by HRA as an Eligibility Specialist since May 1992. She is currently assigned to HRA's St. Nicholas Job Center in Manhattan, earning a salary of \$27,308 per year. She has been suspended without pay.

BRONSON has been charged with Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, and Receiving Unlawful Gratuities. If convicted, she faces up to 7 years in prison.

The investigation was conducted by Gerard Hoey, DOI's Inspector General for HRA, and members of his staff including Deputy Inspector General Benjamin Defibaugh. The Office of Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Robin Segal, under the supervision of Richard Baker, Chief of the District Attorney's Arson and Economic Crimes Unit, is handling the matter.