



Department of Investigation

Press Release

Release # 068-2000

DOI Arrests City Welfare Fraud Investigator For Sex Abuse

-Allegedly Groped Female Recipient-

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2000

EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the arrest of STEVEN RUMBLE, a City Human Resources Administration (HRA) fraud investigator, for sexually abusing a female public assistance recipient.

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, the investigation began in June after the New York City Police Department (NYPD) referred the victim's complaint to DOI. The complainant alleged that RUMBLE, who is assigned to HRA's Eligibility and Verification Review (EVR) unit, had groped her sexually when he returned alone to her apartment after having conducted, earlier that same day, a routine home visit while accompanied by another HRA investigator.

Commissioner Kuriansky explained that EVR fraud investigators assist in determining a recipient's eligibility to receive welfare benefits by making home visits to verify personal information provided by the recipient.

The investigation disclosed that on June 15, RUMBLE, and a second investigator, made a scheduled visit to the recipient's apartment to verify her eligibility to receive welfare benefits. RUMBLE reviewed the client's documentation and assured the 44-year-old woman that her paperwork was in order. However, before leaving the apartment, RUMBLE, out of the presence of his colleague, asked the woman if she were looking for a job, and, when she answered affirmatively, told her that he would help, adding that his assistance would have to be kept confidential.

The investigation revealed that, several hours later, RUMBLE returned alone to the recipient's apartment building, found the woman with her cousin in her cousin's nearby apartment, and directed the cousin to leave the apartment so he could speak privately with the recipient. Once alone with the recipient, RUMBLE allegedly touched himself sexually through his trousers, lunged toward the recipient, and forcibly groped her crotch. RUMBLE then warned the recipient not to reveal what had just occurred, and left the apartment. The recipient immediately told her cousin about the incident, and then notified the police.

RUMBLE, 43, of 34-52 42nd Street, Long Island City, was charged with Coercion in the Second Degree and Official Misconduct, both Class A misdemeanors, and Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree, a Class B misdemeanor. If convicted, he faces up to 1 year in jail. He has been employed since 1996 as a per diem employee and earns a salary of \$16.21 per hour. RUMBLE has been suspended without pay pending the

outcome of the case.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to HRA Commissioner Jason A. Turner and his staff for their cooperation and support in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by Gerard Hoey, DOI's Inspector General for HRA, Detective Ismael Ruiz, of DOI's Investigative Squad, and Confidential Investigators Margaret Shivers and Chandra Pradhuman.

The Office of the New York County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney John Martinez is handling the matter.