



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI ARRESTS EMT AND BUILDING EXPEDITOR IN TWO SEPARATE SCAMS
-- EMT allegedly stole \$500 from a patient; Expeditor allegedly falsified a document --**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) announced today the arrest of ERICA MCCULLOUGH, an Emergency Medical Technician for the New York City Fire Department, for allegedly stealing at least \$500, and the arrest of RICHARD MEZA for allegedly submitting a document with a forged signature while applying to become a registered expeditor with the Department of Buildings (DOB).

MCCULLOUGH, 24, of Queens, will be charged with Petit Larceny and Official Misconduct, both Misdemeanors. If convicted, she faces up to one year in jail. She has worked for the FDNY since 2004.

After receiving a tip that one of MCCULLOUGH's patients lost several hundred dollars while in MCCULLOUGH's care, DOI began its investigation. When interviewed by DOI, MCCULLOUGH admitted that she had stolen \$500.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked FDNY Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and his staff for their assistance and cooperation in this investigation, which was conducted by DOI's office of the Inspector General for FDNY. The office of Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown is handling the matter.

In the other case, on Monday, DOI arrested RICHARD MEZA for allegedly submitting a document with a forged signature when he was applying to become a registered expeditor with the Department of Buildings (DOB). Expeditors are privately employed individuals who are given the ability to file plans, permits, and paperwork for licensees and registered professionals who conduct business with DOB on behalf of the expeditor's clients.

MEZA, 42, of Queens, has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree. If convicted, he faces up to seven years in jail.

Before becoming registered with DOB, expeditors undergo a background investigation, which is performed by DOI and DOB's joint Buildings Special Investigation Unit (BSIU) and requires applicants to submit various documents, including ones that verify the applicant's residence. When MEZA initially applied for his expeditor's license, he was turned away because he did not have acceptable proof of his address. Ten to 15 minutes after being turned away, MEZA returned to the DOB licensing office in Manhattan and resubmitted his application with a copy of his alleged lease agreement. An alert DOB employee suspected that the lease had been falsified and reported the matter to BSIU, which investigated the matter and determined that MEZA allegedly forged his landlord's signature on the lease agreement.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn thanked DOB Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, FAIA, and her staff for their assistance and cooperation with this investigation, which was conducted by DOI's Special Inspector General for DOB Dennis Curran, Investigative Attorney Christine Abbenda, Supervising Investigator James McElligott, BSIU Senior Investigator, Crissy DeAngelo, BSIU Investigators Robert Miller and Linda Revett. The Office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is handling the matter.

Criminal complaints are accusations. 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.

***Get the worms out of the Big Apple.
To report someone ripping off the city, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.***