



Department of Investigation

Press Release

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DOI ARRESTS FORMER LIVERY DRIVER

-- Used Fake Documents To Get License --

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) and Richard A. Brown, Queens District Attorney, today announced the arrest of a former for-hire vehicle driver on felony charges of possessing and presenting forged documents. DOI investigators, in conjunction with the Queens D.A.'s warrant squad, arrested AMIR SHAKEEL today in Queens.

A DOI investigation found that Shakeel, 34, of North Windham, Ct., drove under an alias for four years [1997-2001] while working at Dial Car Service in Brooklyn. He allegedly filed fraudulent documents with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles using a friend's name, date-of-birth, and social security number in order to obtain both a driver's license and a Taxi and Limousine Commission License. Dial car service alerted TLC, which in turn notified DOI. Shakeel left Dial in March 2002. Before his arrest, he was working at a convenience store in northern Connecticut.

"This case should make New Yorkers feel safe when they travel in a taxi or for-hire vehicle," said Commissioner Gill Hearn. "We know which taxi and for-hire drivers are properly licensed and will find those who are not. It should also remind people to protect their personal identification to prevent identity theft, which is one of the nation's fastest growing crimes."

Shakeel will be charged with three felony counts for possessing false documents in June 1998, February 2000 and February 2001. He will also be charged with three felony counts for presenting false documents during those months with the intent to defraud the state. If convicted, he faces up to seven years in jail.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked TLC Commissioner Matthew W. Daus for his agency's assistance in the investigation. The investigation was conducted by John McMahon, DOI's Inspector General for the TLC, Special Investigator Tim Crowe and Detective Pete Gallo. The office of the Queens District Attorney is prosecuting the case, which has been assigned to Assistant District Attorney Phyllis Weiss.