



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF HRA EMPLOYEE ON FEDERAL CHARGES OF
STEALING THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN SECTION 8 SUBSIDIES**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrest of KERRY ANN ECCLESTON, a City Human Resources Administration ("HRA") employee, who was charged with concealing her City income to collect approximately \$17,524 in Section 8 housing subsidies that she was not entitled to receive between 2005 and 2007. The office of Lev Dassin, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, is prosecuting the case.

ECCLESTON, 42, of Brooklyn, has been charged with violating 18 U.S.C. § 641, in the theft of approximately \$17,524 from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"), which funds the Section 8 program. If convicted, she faces up to ten years in federal prison. ECCLESTON has been employed with HRA since 2004, is currently a Clerical Associate, and receives an annual salary of approximately \$32,623.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Today's arrest should remind individuals who think they can successfully falsify their income and illegally obtain housing benefits that arrest and prosecution are the outcome. DOI investigators have diligently continued to search for and uncover this type of fraud, which wastes precious funding."

Today's arrest stems from an investigation in which DOI compared the income City employees reported to the New York City Housing Development Corporation ("HDC") to obtain Section 8 subsidies with the employees' actual income listed in the City's payroll records. This is the tenth arrest by DOI as a result of this proactive investigation.

The Section 8 Rental Assistance Program is a federal program for helping low income individuals to afford housing in the private market. A housing subsidy is paid each month directly to the landlord on behalf of the participating individual, and that individual pays the difference between the actual rent and the amount subsidized by the Section 8 program. The Section 8 housing subsidies in this investigation were administered by HDC and funded by HUD.

According to the criminal complaint, ECCLESTON resided in a Section 8-subsidized apartment in Brooklyn and by concealing her HRA income obtained, between 2005 and 2007, approximately \$17,524 in Section 8 subsidies to which she was not entitled.

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Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked HDC for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by HDC Inspector General Joseph P. Piazza and Special Counsel Catherine Riccards, with assistance provided by agents from the HUD Inspector General's Office in New York.

The case has been assigned to Assistant U.S. Attorney Jessica Ortiz of the U. S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is 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.**