



The City of New York
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**STATEMENT FROM DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATION COMMISSIONER ROSE GILL HEARN
REGARDING THE ARREST OF CITY PARKS WORKER**

Essex Pope, a Crew Chief for the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, was charged today in Manhattan State Court with Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, a class D Felony, Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, a class E Felony; and Receiving Reward for Official Misconduct in the Second Degree, an E Felony. If convicted, he faces up to seven years in jail.

Pope, 47, of the Bronx, allegedly demanded money from participants who were obligated to perform community service in the Alternative Sentencing Program. In exchange for the money, Pope relieved the participants from their obligation to perform community service and certified that they had completed their obligation. Most often, these individuals were assigned to clean up litter and other trash in Marcus Garvey Park (Mount Morris Park) in Central Harlem where Pope worked. Two DOI undercover investigators allegedly paid Pope \$100 and \$140 respectively so they would not have to complete their community service.

Mr. Pope perverted the criminal justice system to line his own pockets. Now he will experience the criminal justice system as a defendant. He will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and those sentenced to community service will have to keep the parks clean and green the way they are supposed to.

In addition to its investigation of Mr. Pope, DOI proactively initiated undercover investigations at other City Parks worksites. I applaud those hard-working, honest Parks workers because they did not solicit bribes from those undercover investigators.

I thank the Office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau for handling this matter, as well as the Commissioner of the Department of Parks and Recreation, Adrian Benepe, for his assistance and cooperation.

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.***