



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI ARRESTS EMPLOYEE OF THE CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (“HRA”) ON CHARGES OF IDENTITY THEFT
*--HRA employee is charged with stealing the identity of another person
to open four credit card accounts--***

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced the arrest today of ALMA SYKES, an Executive Secretary at the New York City Department of Human Resources Administration (“HRA”), on charges she used personal information from another individual to open and use four credit card accounts between 1994 and the present.

SYKES, 56, has been charged with four counts each of Identity Theft in the First Degree, a class D felony, and Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, a class E felony. If convicted, she faces up to seven years in prison.

SYKES, a resident of the Springfield Gardens section in Queens, has been an HRA employee since 1973 and most recently was an Executive Secretary at HRA earning an annual salary of approximately \$53,140.

DOI began an investigation after receiving a complaint in December 2007 that SYKES used identity information from another individual to open and use credit card accounts.

According to the criminal court complaint, DOI’s investigation found that SYKES opened four credit card accounts using the social security number from the victim. The victim did not give permission for SYKES to use her social security number. The billing address on each of the accounts was SYKES’ Queens residence. The total balance on these credit card accounts exceeds \$2,000. Two of the credit card accounts have been closed and two are still active.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, “The criminal conduct charged against this City employee not only resulted in the theft of the victim’s identity but also caused her serious problems with her credit. I am thankful that DOI’s investigation into these allegations put a swift end to this ongoing illegal conduct and brought justice for the victim.”

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for HRA Pat Russo, Counsel to the Inspector General Jennifer Fiellman and Chief Investigator Anthony DeLeo.

Assistant District Attorney Carey B. Alpert from the Office of Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown is prosecuting the case.

Criminal complaints are merely 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.

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