



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS TWO WOMEN FOR STEALING THOUSANDS IN GOVERNMENT FUNDS

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today that SHARON KIMBERLY PHILLIP, former Executive Director of Prospect Home Care Inc., and MARGIE BRYANT, a former Human Resources Compliance Coordinator at Prospect Home Care, have been indicted on federal charges that include embezzlement and money laundering. DOI investigators estimate that the defendants embezzled tens of thousands of dollars in public funds from November 2001 to August 2003, via a contract they held with the City's Human Resources Administration (HRA).

Specifically, Prospect Home Care Inc., located at 1650 Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn, had a \$1.7 million, two-year contract with HRA to provide home attendant services to elderly Medicaid clients in Brooklyn. As part of this contract, Prospect used registered nurses to visit elderly clients, supervise the home attendants and assess the clients' medical conditions. DOI's investigation began when HRA reported that its auditors had suspected potential financial improprieties. DOI's investigation revealed that the two defendants made false representations to over-bill HRA tens of thousands of dollars. Prospect's contract with HRA has expired, and Prospect reports that it has fired the two defendants.

PHILLIP, 38, of Staten Island, and BRYANT, 34, of Queens, have been charged with theft or bribery concerning programs receiving federal funds, embezzling public money, theft or embezzlement in connection with health care, health care fraud, and money laundering. If convicted, each faces up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$500,000.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Fueled by greed, these defendants stole money from tax payers. Now they find that their avarice has serious consequences that include substantial fines and possible jail time."

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked HRA Commissioner Verna Eggleston and her staff for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation. Commissioner Eggleston also stated that although HRA has suffered from this scheme, fortunately none of the elderly clients were at risk or affected by this wrongdoing.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for HRA Benjamin Defibaugh, and members of his staff including Deputy Inspector General Valentine Douglas and Confidential Investigator Solanda Ortiz. This case is being prosecuted by the Office of Roslynn R. Mausekopf, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. Assistant United States Attorney Roger Burlingame has been assigned to handle the prosecution.

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.