



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS PARKS EMPLOYEE FOR ACCEPTING BRIBES

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the arrest of JANET BILLUPS, a City Seasonal Aide, with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), for allegedly receiving bribes totaling \$80 from a DOI undercover posing as an Alternative Sentencing Program (ASP) participant who bought his way out of two days of court-ordered community service in Union Square Park.

BILLUPS, 45, of Manhattan, will be charged with Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony. If convicted, she faces up to seven years in prison.

DOI began its investigation after DPR reported suspicions that ASP participants were offering bribes to DPR employees in order to buy their way out of court-ordered community service in Union Square Park. ASP participants are defendants who have committed offenses ranging from violations to misdemeanors and are sentenced to perform community service. On one occasion, a DOI undercover posing as an ASP participant reported to work at Union Square Park and asked BILLUPS, "Anything I can do to get outta this? You take care of me, I take care of you?" After the brief conversation, BILLUPS agreed to accept \$40 from the undercover investigator in exchange for allowing him to sign in and out on the ASP attendance sheet after only about 15 minutes and recording the times on the sheet to reflect that he'd worked eight hours. During this meeting, BILLUPS warned the undercover investigator that she would not be able to help him on his next community service date if her supervisor was present saying "She can't be here. I can only do it when she's not here." When the undercover investigator reported for service one week later, BILLUPS waited for her supervisor to go into the field, and then accepted another \$40 bribe from the DOI undercover saying "I'll give you credit for the whole day." BILLUPS then allowed the undercover to sign in and out on the ASP attendance sheet after about 60 minutes and recorded the times on the sheet to reflect that he'd worked eight hours.

BILLUPS' understanding was that the undercover investigator was sentenced to serve a total of 16 hours over two days doing community service in Union Square Park. However, after receiving the two separate bribes of \$40, BILLUPS allowed the undercover investigator to leave after serving only about 15 minutes on one day and about 60 minutes another day. She recorded the times on the ASP paperwork reflecting that the undercover investigator had worked his full 16 hours of community service.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Ms. Billups perverted the criminal justice system to line her own pockets. Now she will experience the criminal justice system as a defendant. She 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."

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn thanked the Department of Parks and Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe and his staff for their assistance and cooperation in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Deputy Commissioner Vincent E. Green, Deputy Inspector General Theresa Land-Latta, and First Assistant Inspector General Jeff Dolcimascolo.

The Office of the Manhattan County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is prosecuting and Assistant District Attorney Lauren Littman is handling the matter.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.