



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

80 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038
212-825-5900

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CONTACT: DIANE STRUZZI
(212) 825-5931

**DOI ARRESTS SEVEN FOR ALLEGEDLY DEFRAUDING NYCHA OF NEARLY \$148,000;
ONE INDIVIDUAL ADDITIONALLY CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING HRA OF \$27,000**
-Two individuals remain at large-

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of three New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents and four current and former Section 8 recipients for fraudulently receiving a total of \$147,962 in rent subsidies for apartments located in the Bronx.

DOI arrested SHARAE MIGGINS-GREEN, LILLIAN RODRIGUEZ, KATHLEEN CONKLIN, MATILDA JOHNSON, ROSA GUZMAN, TIESHA MCDONNOUGH, and VEDA JAMES. Each has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony. CONKLIN was additionally charged with Forgery in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, both class D felonies. If convicted, each of those arrested face up to seven years in prison.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "These cases mean DOI has arrested more than three dozen individuals so far this year for allegedly scamming the City's housing authority. DOI will continue to investigate these crimes to ensure that valuable government subsidies are not wasted and are used to assist those truly in need of affordable public housing."

These arrests are part of an ongoing City-wide crackdown by DOI and New York area prosecutors that since 1995 has resulted in the arrest of 510 individuals, including 154 City, State and Federal employees who were charged with stealing more than \$10.6 million in rent and welfare subsidies by hiding their income and assets from the City. So far, these cases have resulted in \$5.5 million in court-imposed restitution. Since January 2007, DOI has arrested 48 individuals for illegally receiving over \$1.4 million in government housing benefits.

In today's arrests, some of the fraudulent acts allegedly committed include: a Section 8 recipient who allegedly obtained \$26,000 in housing subsidies because she failed to report her employment with the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and the United States Postal Service (USPS); a NYCHA tenant who allegedly concealed various sources of household income for years to receive a reduction in rent, even though she and others in the household were employed and/or receiving other income; and a Section 8 recipient who would not have been entitled to the \$13,944 in rental subsidies

she received if she had reported to NYCHA her employment at a pharmaceutical company where she earned an estimated \$31,000 annually.

1. SHARAE MIGGINS-GREEN, 40, a former Section 8 recipient of an apartment in the Soundview section of the Bronx, is accused of illegally obtaining \$26,000 in Section 8 subsidies between August 2002 and July 2005. MIGGINS-GREEN claimed she was unemployed from 2001 through July 2005. As a result, she paid monthly rent ranging between \$113 and \$171. But DOI investigators determined that MIGGINS-GREEN was employed by the USPS in 2001 and that later that same year MIGGINS-GREEN began working for DOE. In 2003, she held a teaching position where she earned approximately \$45,000. DOI investigators also determined that MIGGINS-GREEN worked at a not-for-profit child care center in 2002 and 2003, earning \$20,353 in 2003, and that she received social security income benefits on behalf of her sons. If she had not concealed her true household income, MIGGINS-GREEN would have paid rent ranging between \$761 and \$1,097 per month.

2. KATHLEEN CONKLIN, 57, a resident of an apartment in NYCHA's Fort Independence Towers in the Kingsbridge Heights section of the Bronx, is accused of illegally obtaining \$16,823 in rent subsidies from July 2000 through December 2004 by concealing her employment as a counselor in a hospital. During that time, CONKLIN reported social security benefits as her sole source of income. DOI investigators determined, however, that CONKLIN altered old Social Security Administration letters to make it appear to NYCHA that she was still receiving benefits, when in fact CONKLIN was actively employed earning between \$24,000 and \$31,000 annually. CONKLIN paid \$184 to \$199 in monthly rent when she should have paid \$495 per month.

3. MATILDA JOHNSON, 63, a resident of an apartment located in NYCHA's Castle Hill Houses, is alleged to have concealed various sources of household income in order to obtain a reduction in rent. She is accused of defrauding NYCHA of \$15,858 from February 1999 through January 2005 by concealing that she had been employed by the military and is now receiving a military pension. JOHNSON also concealed other household income such as her daughter's employment as a policy technician in which the daughter earned up to \$31,940 annually. In addition, she did not report that her brother received social security benefits since March 1998. JOHNSON was paying \$253 to \$284 a month in rent, but if she accurately reported her household income she would have paid between \$406 and \$619.

4. ROSA GUZMAN, 43, a Section 8 recipient of an apartment located in the Tremont section of the Bronx, allegedly concealed her housekeeping employment at a nursing home and received \$15,400 in rental subsidies illegally from November 2003 through July 2006. On the yearly Affidavits of Income GUZMAN filed with NYCHA, she reported social security benefits and money contributed by her husband as her sole source of income. However, DOI determined that GUZMAN had been gainfully employed since June 2003, during some years earning up to nearly \$30,000. GUZMAN's rent ranged between \$90 and \$142 per month when she should have paid between \$509 and \$628 a month.

5. TIESHA MCDONNOUGH, 36, a former Section 8 recipient of an apartment located in the Wakefield section of the Bronx, is accused of illegally obtaining \$13,944 in rental subsidies during the period August 2001 through March 2005. Although MCDONNOUGH was employed with a pharmaceutical company from November 2000 to June 2004 and during some years earned up to \$31,000 annually, she reported babysitting as her sole source of employment. MCDONNOUGH paid rent ranging between \$172 and \$316 per month, while NYCHA paid rent subsidies on her behalf ranging between \$340 and \$660 per month. Had MCDONNOUGH reported her true household income, she would not have been entitled to any of the Section 8 subsidies NYCHA paid on her behalf.

6. VEDA JAMES, 36, a resident of an apartment located in NYCHA's Betances Houses located in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx, is accused of concealing from NYCHA her employment as a Care Worker with a non-profit social services agency between October 2002 and 2005 in order to receive a reduction in rent. She is accused of defrauding NYCHA of approximately \$10,000. JAMES reported public assistance as her sole source of income. On her yearly Affidavits of Income she continuously checked "no" to the question, "Does anyone in the apartment work?" As a result, JAMES paid \$137 a month in rent for her NYCHA apartment. JAMES earned up to \$20,458 from her employment as a Care Worker. As a result, she should have paid between \$428 and \$495 in monthly rent.

As a result of this investigation, DOI also determined that JAMES had not reported her income to the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) which administers public assistance. She is accused of defrauding HRA of approximately \$27,000 from October 2002 to March 2006 in order to receive public assistance, food stamps, and Medicaid benefits for which she was not entitled. As a result, JAMES was also charged today with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and several counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony.

7. LILLIAN RODRIGUEZ, 50, a Section 8 recipient in the Crotona Park section of the Bronx, is accused of illegally obtaining \$11,806 in Section 8 subsidies from November 2003 to November 2006. During this three-year period, RODRIGUEZ allegedly concealed from NYCHA her DOE employment as a School Aide, in which she earned up to \$18,298. RODRIGUEZ reported public assistance as her sole source of income and, as a result, paid monthly rent ranging between \$129 and \$150. DOI investigators determined that RODRIGUEZ should have paid between \$359 and \$596 per month.

These investigations were conducted by NYCHA Inspector General Robert J. McSweeney and members of his staff, including Senior Deputy Inspectors General Kevin Smith and Ralph Iannuzzi, Deputy Inspector General Bergia Telesford, First Assistant Inspector General James Hylton, Senior Assistant Inspector General Anthony Capek and Assistant Inspector General Rosemary Caruso, Chief Investigator Christopher France, Special Investigators Emily Bizzarro, Louis Vega and Denis Kennedy, Confidential Investigator Lia J. Pasichow and Deputy Counsel Lauren Hintz.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanks the HRA for its assistance in the investigation.

The Office of Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the cases.

Criminal complaints are merely an accusation. 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.***