



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS HRA SUPERVISOR IN HOUSING SCAM

– Forged documents to pretend her mother was still alive in order to keep low-cost apartment –

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of a Human Resources Administration employee and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) resident for allegedly forging documents to mislead housing officials into believing that her deceased mother was still alive and residing in her own NYCHA apartment. In May, DOI arrested 12 individuals for perpetuating similar schemes.

VALERIE CARTHEN, 45, of East New York, Brooklyn, has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree. If convicted, she faces up to seven years in prison.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Today's arrest follows recent arrests of other individuals who developed intricate schemes to gain scarce and valuable public housing that had been occupied by relatives who died. Greed doesn't pay — especially when it involves the death of a loved one. DOI and NYCHA will continue to aggressively investigate and bring to prosecution individuals who deprive eligible low-income applicants from obtaining public housing."

DOI's investigation involved using a computer program to match data in NYCHA tenant records with death certificates filed with the New York City Department of Health. CARTHEN, a HRA Supervising Social Worker, completed a false affidavit to make it appear that her mother, who died in September 1999, was still alive and living in her 3-room NYCHA apartment at Glenwood Houses in East New York, Brooklyn. CARTHEN did not live with her mother; however she is a NYCHA tenant in the same development. NYCHA requires tenants to complete annual affidavits that detail the tenant's household population and income. CARTHEN told DOI investigators that she forged the housing affidavit to allow her brother, who had been banned from all NYCHA premises since 1992 due to his involvement in drug activity, to reside in the apartment. To further the scheme, the brother appeared at Glenwood Houses Management Office dressed in women's clothing and introduced himself as his mother.

The investigation was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner and NYCHA Inspector General Steven A. Pasichow and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Kevin Smith, Acting Deputy Inspector General Bergia Telesford, and Confidential Investigator Alexandra Hampton. The Office of Charles J. Hynes, District Attorney, Kings County, is prosecuting the matter.

Criminal complaints are merely an accusation. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Get the worms out of the Big Apple.
To report someone ripping off the city, call 311 or DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.