



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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Release # 56-2004
nyc.gov/html/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2004

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DOI ARRESTS ACS EMPLOYEE IN \$21,000 DAYCARE VOUCHER SCAM
— Got three years of free daycare by posing as her own child's foster mom —

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of PAMELA MILLS, a Child Welfare Specialist with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS), for fraudulently obtaining more than \$21,000 in daycare subsidies from the City.

MILLS, 36, of Queens, has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. If convicted, MILLS faces up to seven years in prison. MILLS was suspended from her employment upon her arrest.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "While we all can imagine how difficult it is for working parents to find good, affordable daycare that does not mean one should lie or steal in order to have it. Let this case be a warning to those who would concoct similar schemes: The City wants to help working parents but will not be duped into providing daycare subsidies to those who don't qualify for them."

DOI's investigation began after ACS forwarded an anonymous complaint that alleged MILLS had engaged in a fraudulent scheme to obtain a "priority" daycare voucher for her biological child. The complaint alleged that MILLS was posing as the child's foster parent so she could obtain a "priority" day care voucher that would enable her to qualify for day care subsidies, circumvent a waiting list for those subsidies and receive fully subsidized daycare. Biological parents who are eligible for daycare vouchers receive partially subsidized daycare, and must pay an additional monthly fee based upon household income. However, if MILLS herself had applied for daycare vouchers, her income and household population would have made her ineligible to receive daycare vouchers from the City.

MILLS, who has worked for ACS since 1996, was assigned to the ACS Queens Division of Foster Care Services/Family Permanency Unit in Jamaica where her duties included assisting foster parents applying for the priority voucher program, and referring foster children for daycare services. Investigators determined that MILLS created and submitted her own application requesting a "priority" daycare voucher for a child for whom she falsely claimed to be the foster parent. MILLS allegedly created the name of a fictitious "biological" parent for the child, listed herself as the foster parent, and provided an ACS case number (a requirement on the application) that actually belonged to a separate, legitimate ACS case that MILLS herself oversaw. From May 2000 until April 2003, MILLS received more than \$21,000 in fully subsidized day care services for her own biological child. During this period, MILLS continued to submit fraudulent paperwork to ACS in order to receive payments through the priority voucher program.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked ACS Commissioner John Mattingly and his staff for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for ACS Benjamin Defibaugh, and members of his staff, including Deputy Counsel Seth Gordon and Assistant Inspector General Margaret Shivers. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Theresa Smith of the Queens County District Attorney's Integrity Bureau.

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.

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