



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: KEITH SCHWAM
(212) 825-5931

DOI ARRESTS FOUR "SEASONAL" CITY EMPLOYEES IN UNEMPLOYMENT SCAM
Ten others were arrested last month, combined thefts exceed \$79,000.

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the felony arrests of four "seasonal" City employees who fraudulently stole a total of \$15,851 in unemployment insurance payments while receiving their City salaries. The four "double-dipping" arrests announced today closely follow DOI's arrests last month of 10 other "seasonal" employees on felony charges of stealing \$63,310 the same way (Release # 39, May 18, 2006).

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "City employees who steal unemployment compensation from our taxpayers not only risk arrest, prosecution, termination of employment, and possibly jail, but will be required to repay the City. This "double-dipping" scam is a foolish way for people to ruin their records and their opportunities for future employment. Moreover, as the 14 recent arrests show, DOI is checking, so the chances of getting caught are quite real."

Commissioner Gill Hearn noted that in the past eight years DOI has arrested 104 "seasonal" employees for unemployment frauds exceeding \$338,000.

A "seasonal" employee may work for any number of City agencies for part of the year during a defined season. For example, both the Parks and Police Departments have "seasonal" employees. "Seasonal" City employees are entitled to collect unemployment insurance benefits during the off-season, when they are not working. Once their seasonal work begins, and they start receiving their City salaries, "seasonal" employees are supposed to stop collecting unemployment insurance benefits. However, in the cases announced today, the "seasonal" employees are charged with stealing unemployment insurance benefits while collecting their City paychecks and falsely reporting that they were not working. The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) reimburses the State for unemployment insurance benefits paid to City employees.

ANTHONY VALENTINO, 47, of Rockaway Beach, a City Seasonal Aide with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, was arrested on a criminal complaint charging him with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree for fraudulently collecting \$4,567.11 in unemployment insurance benefits. If convicted, VALENTINO faces up to seven years in prison.

PATRICIA DAVIS, 55, of Manhattan, a City Seasonal Aide with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, was arrested on a criminal complaint charging her with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree for fraudulently collecting \$4,175.00 in unemployment insurance benefits. If convicted, DAVIS faces up to seven years in prison.

NATOSHJA BOSTON, 41, of Brooklyn, a School Crossing Guard with the New York City Police Department, was arrested on a criminal complaint charging her with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree for fraudulently collecting \$3,737.25 in unemployment insurance benefits. If convicted, BOSTON faces up to seven years in prison.

LULA PHILLIPS, 59, of Manhattan, a School Crossing Guard with the New York City Police Department, was arrested on a criminal complaint charging her with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree for fraudulently collecting \$3,371.25 in unemployment insurance benefits. If convicted, PHILLIPS faces up to seven years in prison.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DCAS Commissioner Martha Hirst and her staff for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation and the members of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office Detective Squad, including Detective Judy Newton, for their assistance with the arrests. In addition, Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked the members of the New York City Police Department Internal Affairs Bureau, the New York State Department of Labor, and the New York State Department of Labor Inspector General's Office for their continued assistance with this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Assistant Commissioner and Inspector General for DCAS Robert Joyce and members of his staff, including Investigator Avastie Satyacharran. The cases are being prosecuted by the Office of New York County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau and are assigned to Assistant District Attorney Joanne Siegmund, under the supervision of Leroy Frazer, Chief of the Special Prosecutions Bureau.

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 311 or DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.***