



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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Release #39-2015
nyc.gov/html/doi

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2015**

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DOI ARRESTS 17 INDIVIDUALS IN HOUSING FRAUD SWEEP THAT RESULTED IN THE THEFT OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN PUBLIC HOUSING SUBSIDIES

MARK G. PETERS, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrests of 17 individuals in a housing fraud sweep that exposed an array of illegal schemes, such as collecting public housing subsidies for a Section 8 apartment while illegally renting out that apartment to a friend and residing elsewhere; concealing a familial relationship between landlord and tenant, prohibited under Section 8 rules, to illegally collect Section 8 housing subsidies; and failing to report the income and presence of spouses and friends living in a Section 8 or conventional public housing apartment, thereby illegally increasing the amount of subsidies received or decreasing the amount of rent paid. DOI has been working with an array of prosecutors on these investigations, specifically the office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District, the offices of the Queens County District Attorney and Bronx County District Attorney. In addition, DOI worked with the Office of the City Comptroller, which referred a matter to DOI as a result of data matches the office conducted with various City records that revealed potential fraud. The arrests involved in this sweep took place during the last five weeks.

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "This pernicious fraud undermines government's efforts to ensure affordable housing for some of the most vulnerable in New York City. Renting out a Section 8 apartment while still collecting subsidies, misrepresenting income and concealing familial relationships are just some of the ways people are stealing from the system. Working with our law enforcement partners, DOI is finding these schemes and shutting them down, as demonstrated in the more than three dozen housing fraud arrests made this year."

New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer said, "These fraudsters engaged in the most reprehensible kind of conduct -- stealing scarce housing resources from our most vulnerable citizens, while at the same time lining their own pockets. I applaud the Department of Investigation for their great work."

To date this calendar year, and including the arrests listed in today's announcement, DOI has arrested 39 individuals on charges of housing fraud involving both Section 8 subsidies and conventional public housing subsidies distributed by the New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA") and the City Department of Housing and Preservation ("HPD"), and which are associated with the theft of more than \$1.4 million in public funds.

Following are the individuals arrested over the past six weeks as a result of DOI's investigations:

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- DEONANDAN SINGH, 66, and TARAMETEE SINGH, 48, of Queens, N.Y., were arrested on November 5, 2015, and each were charged with Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, in connection with receiving Section 8 subsidies as tenant and landlord in a Queens apartment, respectively, but concealing the fact that they are siblings. Section 8 rules preclude familial ties between landlords and tenants. The investigation found that both defendants submitted letters to NYCHA falsely stating they were not related and as a result fraudulently received \$91,849 in Section 8 benefits, between December 2007 and June 2015.
- IRIS CAMACHO, 57, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 24, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Theft of Public Funds in connection with failing to report the presence of her son and husband and their related incomes, including the income her husband received working as the superintendent of the Section 8 apartment building in the Bronx where the family lived. As a result, the defendant fraudulently received \$85,362 in Section 8 benefits between October 2008 and October 2015.
- ISHA DOTSON, 41, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested on November 24, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Theft of Public Funds in connection with failing to report to NYCHA the presence of her husband and the income he received as an employee of the City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. As a result, the defendant fraudulently received \$85,346 in Section 8 benefits between November 2007 and August 2015. The New York City Comptroller referred this matter to DOI for further investigation.
- MARIE KASSOMBOLA, 52, of New York, N.Y., was arrested on November 23, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Theft of Public Funds in connection with failing to reside in her Section 8 apartment, renting the apartment to her friend and continuing to receive Section 8 subsidies. As a result, the defendant fraudulently received \$67,335 in Section 8 subsidies between May 2008 and December 2013.
- ETHEL EVANS, 58, of Queens, N.Y., was arrested on November 9, 2015, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, and Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies, in connection with failing to report the presence and income of her husband, resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$63,628 in Section 8 subsidies between May 2006 and April 2015.
- SUSAN JARRETT, 47, of Queens, N.Y. was arrested on November 18, 2015, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies, and Obstructing Governmental Administration in the Second Degree and Resisting Arrest, class A misdemeanors, in connection with failing to disclose to HPD that she co-owned the property where a Section 8 subsidy was paid on her behalf, resulting in the defendant defrauding HPD of approximately \$62,000 between December 2008 and May 2013.
- SALLY MATIAS, 53, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 24, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Theft of Public Funds in connection with failing to report the presence of her husband in her Section 8 apartment and the income he earned, resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$57,286 in Section 8 subsidies between July 2010 and November 2015.
- MARIA GUZMAN, 41, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 23, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Theft of Public Funds in connection with concealing the presence of her husband and his income resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$53,019 in Section 8 subsidies between December 2009 and September 2014.

- ROSA DAVILA, 50, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 23, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Theft of Public Funds in connection with concealing the presence of another individual and the income he earned, resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$51,970 in Section 8 subsidies between July 2008 and November 2015.
- HELENA DAVIS, 32, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested on October 26, 2015, and charged with the federal offense of Conspiracy to Defraud the Government in connection with failing to report the presence of her husband and the income he received from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority/New York City Transit Authority (MTA/NYCTA) resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$47,614 in Section 8 subsidies between February 2012 and April 2015.
- MARIA WILLIAMS, 57, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 19, 2015, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree, class D felonies, and Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, Welfare Fraud in the Fourth Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies, in connection with failing to report the presence of her husband and the income he received as an employee of the City Health and Hospitals Corporation, resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$33,606 in Section 8 subsidies between May 2009 and January 2013.
- ELISA STREETER, 33, and her husband, EUGENE STREETER, 33, both of Brooklyn, N.Y., were arrested on October 26, 2015, and each charged with the federal offense of Conspiracy to Defraud the Government in connection with concealing EUGENE STREETER's presence and income in the Section 8 apartment. The investigation found that EUGENE STREETER had been listed as a member of the household until 2009 when the couple requested his name be removed. As a result, the defendants fraudulently received \$32,844 in Section 8 subsidies between February 2010 and November 2014.
- SIMEONA GOMEZ, 65, of Brooklyn, N.Y., was arrested on November 9, 2015, and charged with Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, and Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies, in connection with failing to report the presence of her daughter and the income she received, resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$21,848 in Section 8 subsidies between July 2012 and March 2014.
- MILDRED GRANADOS, 62, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 12, 2015, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree, class D felonies, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony, in connection with concealing the presence and income of her niece in her NYCHA's Pelham Parkway Houses' apartment, resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$17,428 in housing subsidies between February 2010 and September 2012.
- JOHN ATKINSON, 45, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested on November 20, 2015, and 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, in connection with concealing the presence of his cousin in his NYCHA Twin Parks West apartment resulting in the defendant fraudulently receiving \$12,343 in housing subsidies between December 2007 and January 2012.

Upon conviction, the federal offenses of Conspiracy to Defraud the Government and Theft of Public Funds are punishable by up to five years in federal prison and up to 10 years in federal prison, respectively.

Upon conviction, a class C felony is punishable by up to 15 years in prison, a class D felony by up to seven years in prison, a class E felony by up to four years in prison, and a class A misdemeanor by up to a year's incarceration.

The Office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York is prosecuting the DAVIS, CAMACHO, DAVILA, DOTSON, MATIAS, GUZMAN, KASSOMBOLA, and ELISA and EUGENE STREETER cases.

Assistant District Attorney Rosemary Buccheri, of the Queens County District Attorney's Office is prosecuting the EVANS, GOMEZ, DEONANDAN and TARAMETEE SINGH, and JARRETT cases, under the supervision of Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, Economic Crimes Bureau.

From the Bronx County District Attorney's Office, Assistant District Attorney Peter D'Angelo is prosecuting the ATKINSON case, Assistant District Attorney Markus Szejnberg is prosecuting the GRANADOS case and Assistant District Attorney Christopher Regan is prosecuting the WILLIAMS case, under the supervision of Cristina S.W. Park, Supervisor of the Arson/Economic Crime Bureau.

DOI Commissioner Peters thanked United States Attorney for the Southern District Preet Bharara, New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer, Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson, Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, NYCHA Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye, Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Vicki Been, and their staffs, for their assistance and cooperation in these investigations.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's office of the Inspector General for NYCHA, specifically Confidential Investigators Patricia Sedacca and Wenny Hon, Chief Investigators Emily Bizzarro and Ivonne Alvarado-DeJesus, Assistant Inspectors General Robin Jacknow and John Reatz,, under the supervision of Inspector General Ralph Iannuzzi and with assistance from Counsel Lauren Hintz; and the City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, specifically Assistant Inspector General Ondie Frederick, under the supervision of Inspector General Jessica Heegan. The sweep was supervised by Associate Commissioner James J. Flaherty, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Michael Carroll and First Deputy Commissioner Lesley Brovner.

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

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. 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. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

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