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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**DA VANCE, COMMISSIONER PETERS: HRA PEACE OFFICER SENTENCED
TO PRISON FOR SEXUALLY ASSAULTING WOMAN IN CUSTODY**

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., and New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”) Commissioner Mark G. Peters today announced the sentencing of JOHN LUGO, 35, a former peace officer employed by the New York City Human Resources Administration (“HRA”), to five years in state prison for sexually assaulting a woman who was in his custody. On May 25, 2018, the defendant pleaded guilty in New York State Supreme Court to Criminal Sexual Act in the First Degree.

“John Lugo breached his duty as a peace officer in one of the most egregious ways possible,” said District Attorney Vance. “Instead of protecting and serving an individual in his care, he used his position and power to sexually assault her. I thank the brave survivor in this case for coming forward, and our partners at DOI for their strong commitment to rooting out criminal misconduct by City employees.”

DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters said: “This former HRA Sergeant now faces the justice he deserves from the reprehensible crimes he committed—using his status and power as an officer of the law to seriously harm an HRA client at one of the City’s Job Centers. These centers are sanctuaries for vulnerable New Yorkers—providing clients assistance with financial, and nutritional needs. Instead, this former City employee used the facility to commit heinous acts, robbing his victim of the security and trust that should have been provided. DOI thanks the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office for their prosecution and partnership in this investigation.”

As admitted in the defendant’s guilty plea and according to documents filed in court, LUGO was hired by HRA as a Special Officer in September 2012, and in August 2016, he was promoted to the position of Supervising Special Officer. While on duty on March 17, 2017, the defendant placed a 43-year-old woman under arrest, purportedly for trespassing at an HRA Job Center at West 14th Street in Manhattan. LUGO then brought the woman to an office, and while she was restrained in handcuffs, forcibly compelled her to perform a sex act on him.

Assistant D.A. Eun-Ha Kim handled the prosecution of the case under the supervision of Assistant D.A. Martha Bashford, Chief of the Sex Crimes Unit, and Executive Assistant D.A. John Irwin, Chief of the Trial Division. Senior Rackets Investigator Steven Lane also assisted with the case.

District Attorney Vance thanked DOI and the Office of the Inspector General for HRA, and in particular, Assistant Inspector General Octavia Hill, working under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General Margaret Shivers, Inspector General Milton Yu, Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Investigations Susan Lambiase, and First Deputy Commissioner Lesley Brovner for their assistance with the investigation.

Defendant Information:

JOHN LUGO, D.O.B. 9/14/1982
New York, NY

Convicted:

- Criminal Sexual Act in the First Degree, a class B felony, 1 count

Sentenced:

- 5 years in state prison

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