



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY, KINGS COUNTY
RENAISSANCE PLAZA at 350 JAY STREET
BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11201-2908
718-250-2300
www.brooklynda.org

CHARLES J. HYNES
District Attorney

JERRY SCHMETTERER
Director of Public Information

Contact: (718) 250-2300

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**KINGS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY CHARLES J. HYNES
AND NEW YORK CITY HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION
COMMISSIONER ROBERT DOAR ANNOUNCE
INDICTMENT OF FIVE OUT-OF-TOWNERS CHARGED WITH
FALSELY CLAIMING BROOKLYN RESIDENCY, IN ORDER TO
ILLEGALLY COLLECT MEDICAID BENEFITS**

Brooklyn, January 25, 2011 – Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and New York City Human Resources Administration Commissioner Robert Doar today announced the arrest and indictment of five welfare cheats charged with falsely claiming Brooklyn residency and hiding income and assets on Medicaid applications.

“As Brooklyn becomes more popular, it is natural to see some of the borough’s ex-pats flaunt their Brooklyn roots, but criminals, who, like these defendants, claim Brooklyn residency to steal from programs intended to help our city’s poor, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law – in Brooklyn,” said District Attorney Hynes. “I would like to thank Commissioner Doar and HRA for all their help and cooperation in this investigation.”

“To be eligible for New York City public assistance programs, an applicant must live in New York City. Those who intentionally provide false information on their residency in an official application are committing fraud and should be forewarned that their actions will not be tolerated and that they will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I would like to thank Brooklyn District Attorney Hynes for his continuous commitment to pursue the prosecution of those who commit Medicaid fraud,” said HRA Commissioner Robert Doar.

Fouad Fouad, 47, and his wife, Nevertity Ibrahim, 39, are charged with claiming on Medicaid application forms that they lived in a rented apartment in Dyker Heights and that their only source of income was the \$300 per week Fouad earned as a taxi driver. In reality, the couple lived in a Milltown, New Jersey house they purchased for \$273,000 in December of 2005, while collecting income from two other rental properties they owned in South Amboy, New Jersey, according to the indictment. Between January 1, 2006 and November 30, 2010, the couple is charged with claiming \$71,704 in Medicaid benefits for themselves and their two children.

Tau Sing Chow, 47, and his wife, Yue Hao Zhou, 37, are charged with collecting \$26,449 in Medicaid benefits for themselves and their two children, from August 1, 2006 to June 10, 2010. The couple moved into a home they purchased for \$120,000 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in August of 2006, and their children have been regularly attending Philadelphia public schools

ever since. However, after being rejected for welfare benefits in Philadelphia due to Chow's income as a chef in a Philadelphia Wegmans supermarket, the couple continued to claim on HRA Medicaid applications that they resided in an apartment in Bensonhurst, and they continually failed to disclose their ownership of the Philadelphia property, according to the indictment.

Reyes Lopez, 57, is charged with fraudulently collecting \$17,000 in Medicaid benefits, over two years, for herself and two children, by hiding the fact she was married to an income producing husband and no longer living in Brooklyn. Reyes Lopez and her husband and children were living in a Valley Stream property they purchased for \$400,000 in 2007. She worked at Jaguar Contracting, a business owned and operated by her husband. Furthermore, she failed to disclose that her husband collects rental income at the Brooklyn home they bought and lived in before they moved to Valley Stream, according to the indictment.

Charges against defendants Fouad Fouad and Nevertity Ibrahim include Welfare Fraud in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. If convicted of the top count, Welfare Fraud in the Second Degree, both defendants face a maximum of fifteen years in prison.

Charges for Tau Sing Chow and Yue Hao Zhou include Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. The maximum sentence permissible for Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree is seven years in prison.

Charges against Reyes Lopez include Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. The maximum sentence permissible for Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree is seven years in prison.

An indictment is an accusatory instrument and not proof of a defendant's guilt.

The cases are being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney's Sabrina Thanse and John Vourderis of the Public Assistance Crimes Unit. Lauren Mack is the Chief of the Public Assistance Crimes Unit.

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Contact: Jonah Bruno
718-250-2300