



# Department of Investigation

## *Press Release*

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### **DOI ARRESTS NYCHA EMPLOYEE IN \$4,300 HOUSING FRAUD** *—Misued Position To Secure Section 8 Benefits—*

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of CLAUDIA DAVILA, a Housing Assistant for the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), for fraudulently receiving \$4,295 in NYCHA Section 8 rent subsidies over a 5-month period.

Commissioner Hearn said that DOI's investigation followed an earlier investigation resulting in the arrest, last December, of DAVILA's husband, GEORGE DAVILA, an employee of a New York City Sheriff's towing contractor, and BRADLEY NORRIS, a Deputy Sheriff, for defrauding the owners and drivers of 23 scofflaw vehicles in Manhattan and the Bronx by unlawfully demanding and keeping cash payments, totaling more than \$11,000, for unpaid City Parking Violations fines, and then issuing fake City Department of Transportation and City Department of Finance receipts to the victims. During the course of that investigation, DOI learned that GEORGE DAVILA had been receiving Section 8 rent subsidies, paid by NYCHA, for his apartment located at 320 East 176<sup>th</sup> Street in the Bronx.

In addition to managing 345 public housing developments, NYCHA administers the Section 8 program, a federally funded, leased housing program which provides government rent subsidies to nearly 75,000 needy income-eligible families living in privately-owned dwellings.

In examining NYCHA's records, the investigation disclosed numerous irregularities, including the fact that GEORGE DAVILA had never actually applied for, and therefore was ineligible to receive, Section 8 rent subsidies. DOI's investigation revealed a scheme in which CLAUDIA DAVILA, a Housing Assistant assigned to NYCHA's Leased Housing Department in the Bronx, fraudulently added her husband's name to a pre-existing, but inactive, Section 8 case belonging to a woman who had been in a drug treatment center. CLAUDIA DAVILA allegedly reactivated this case, changed the tenant's name to that of GEORGE DAVILA, and the tenant's address to her own. As a result of DAVILA's fraudulent actions, NYCHA paid, from August 2001 to December 2001, \$4,295.50 in Section 8 subsidized housing benefits for the apartment that she shared with her husband, GEORGE DAVILA.

DAVILA, 29, of 320 East 176<sup>th</sup> Street in the Bronx, has been a NYCHA Housing Assistant since December 28, 1998, earning an annual salary of \$34,208. She has been suspended without pay. DAVILA has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a Class D Felony, Tampering with Public Records in the First Degree, a Class D Felony, and Falsifying Business records in the First Degree, a Class E felony. If convicted, she faces up to 7 years in prison.

## DOI Arrests NYCHA Employee In \$4,300 Housing Fraud

The investigation was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner and NYCHA Inspector General Steven A. Pasichow and members of his staff including Deputy Inspector General Kevin R. Smith, and Confidential Investigator Michelle Purnavel.

The Office of Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney George DeMeo, under the supervision of Bureau Chief Richard Baker, is handling the matter.