



# Department of Investigation

## *Press Release*

**Release #023-2001**

**THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2001**

### **DOI ARRESTS DAUGHTER OF DECEASED SUBWAY CONDUCTOR FOR \$27K NYCERS PENSION FRAUD**

EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of MELANIE ZEIGLER, the daughter of a retired Metropolitan Transportation Authority-New York City Transit subway conductor, for stealing over \$27,000 in City pension checks issued after her father's death.

Commissioner Kuriansky said an investigation began in May 2000, when the New York City Employees' Retirement System (NYCERS) notified DOI that ZEIGLER allegedly negotiated a number of her father's pension checks after his death. NYCERS had mailed the pension checks to ZEIGLER's apartment at 18 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street in Brooklyn, where her father, EDWARD ZEIGLER, had also resided until his May 10, 1998, death.

According to today's charges, between May 11, 1998, and February 29, 2000, MELANIE ZEIGLER allegedly stole \$27,315, by endorsing her name on 18 NYCERS \$1,517, monthly pension checks that were inadvertently issued to the elder ZEIGLER after his death, and then fraudulently negotiating the checks at two Brooklyn check cashing establishments--Lefta Check Cashing Corporation at 1908 Church Avenue, and Flatbush Avenue Check Cashing, Inc., at 1154 Flatbush Avenue. ZEIGLER, who exercised power of attorney over her father's affairs, was obligated to notify NYCERS of his death, and failed to do so. ZEIGLER's father had retired in 1989 as a subway conductor after nearly 23 years' service with NYC Transit.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his appreciation to NYCERS Executive Director John J. Murphy and members of his staff for their assistance and cooperation in the investigation.

ZEIGLER, 34, of 18 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street in Brooklyn, a personnel assistant for a Wall Street personnel firm, has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a Class D felony, and Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a Class E felony. If convicted, she faces up to 7 years in prison.

The investigation was conducted by Julia Davis, DOI's Inspector General for the New York City Employees' Retirement System, and members of her staff, including Special Investigators Alicia George and Michael Corrigan, and Examining Attorney Monique Imbert.

The Office of Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Peter Zanolin, of the DA's Rackets Division, is handling the matter.