



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

80 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038
212-825-5900

Release #112-2008
nyc.gov/html/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2008

CONTACT: DIANE STRUZZI
(212) 825-5931

**DOI ARRESTS CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY EMPLOYEE FOR
STEALING THOUSANDS IN TENANTS' HOUSING PAYMENTS**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrest of DEBORAH STUCKEY, a Housing Assistant employed by the New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA"), on charges of stealing approximately \$11,220 in rent and other housing payments submitted by about 22 NYCHA tenants between November 2007 and October 2008.

The office of Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the case.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "As New Yorkers grapple with tight budgets, especially for public housing, the last thing we need is a public housing employee pilfering tenants' rent payments. Anyone caught stealing public funds should be prepared to face arrest, prosecution, and possible prison time."

STUCKEY, 53, of Manhattan, was charged with 42 counts of Forgery in the Second Degree and one count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, class D felonies; one count of Scheme to Defraud and 42 counts of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, class E felonies; and Official Misconduct, a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison, a class E felony is punishable by up to four years in prison and a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration.

STUCKEY worked at the Millbrook Houses in the Bronx, has been employed by NYCHA for about seven years and currently receives an annual salary of approximately \$33,400. As a Housing Assistant, she was responsible for collecting rent, security deposits and other payments from NYCHA tenants, for recording those payments and providing them to other NYCHA employees for deposit.

DOI initiated its investigation in October 2008 after receiving a tip.

According to the criminal complaint, DOI reviewed approximately 42 money orders from NYCHA tenants who submitted them to STUCKEY to pay rent, security deposits and other housing costs. The investigation found that STUCKEY altered and wrote her name on the money orders to make them payable to her rather than NYCHA, cashed them at a Bronx check cashing establishment and failed to record them in NYCHA's books. As a result, NYCHA's records indicated that these tenants owed money that they had already paid.

more

DOI's investigation found that NYCHA did not receive any of the funds tendered by approximately 22 tenants and was defrauded of approximately \$11,220.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked the staff at NYCHA for their assistance in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for NYCHA, Robert J. McSweeney, and members of his staff, including Senior Deputy Inspector General Ralph Iannuzzi, Assistant Inspector General Suzanne Vitti, Chief Investigator John Reatz, and Special Investigators Stephen Mattei and Louis Vega.

Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Brandler of the office of the Bronx County District Attorney is prosecuting the case.

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

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. 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.

**Get the worms out of the Big Apple.
To report someone ripping off the city, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.**