



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS TWO "SEASONAL" CITY EMPLOYEES ON CHARGES OF DOUBLE-DIPPING

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced today the arrests of two "seasonal" City employees who fraudulently obtained a total of approximately \$7,504 in unemployment insurance payments while also receiving their City salaries. The office of New York County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is prosecuting the cases.

Since 1998, DOI has arrested 104 seasonal City employees on charges of illegally collecting more than \$338,000 in unemployment insurance benefits.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Tapping into unemployment benefits while collecting City wages amounts to stealing from the City's taxpayers. Because the double-payments are on record, it's also a dead-end road to arrest and criminal prosecution."

A "seasonal" employee may work for any number of City agencies for part of the year and is entitled to collect unemployment insurance benefits when not working during the off-season. Once their seasonal work begins and they receive their City salaries, "seasonal" employees must stop collecting unemployment insurance benefits. However, in the cases announced today, the "seasonal" employees are charged with stealing unemployment insurance benefits while collecting their City paychecks and falsely reporting to the New York State Department of Labor ("DOL") that they were not working. The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services ("DCAS") reimburses the State for unemployment insurance benefits paid to City employees.

CASSANDRA BROWN, 39, of Manhattan, a School Crossing Guard with the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison. According to the criminal complaint, DOI's investigation found that between October 2004 and December 2006 BROWN certified weekly to DOL that she was unemployed even though she was actually working and receiving pay as a school crossing guard during that time period. As a result of those false certifications, BROWN fraudulently collected approximately \$3,544 in unemployment insurance benefits. BROWN began working as a school crossing guard in May 2003 and is paid approximately \$12.90 an hour. She was suspended without pay today.

JACQUELINE EDINGTON, 51, of Manhattan, a former seasonal City employee with the Department of Parks and Recreation ("DPR"), was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree. According to the criminal complaint, between July and December 2007, EDINGTON certified weekly to DOL that she was unemployed even though she was actually working and getting paid as a DPR maintenance worker during that time period. As a result of those false certifications, EDINGTON fraudulently collected approximately \$3,960 in unemployment insurance benefits. EDINGTON began

working at DPR in December 2006, and when she left in December 2007 she was paid an hourly wage of \$10.24.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DCAS Commissioner Martha K. Hirst, NYPD Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, DPR Commissioner Adrian Benepe and New York County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau and their staffs for their assistance in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI Investigator Tara Benn, and supervised by Deputy Inspector General Jeffrey Dolcimascolo, Inspector General Faisal Khan and Deputy Commissioner Vincent E. Green.

Assistant District Attorney Amy Justaniano of the New York County District Attorney's Office has been assigned to the prosecution of the case.

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

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