



The City of New York
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**DOI ARRESTS EIGHT INDIVIDUALS IN THREE WEEKS ON CHARGES OF DEFRAUDING
THE CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY OF APPROXIMATELY \$174,200**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced that over the past three weeks DOI arrested eight individuals – four this week – on charges of concealing income and household composition to defraud the New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA"). In total, NYCHA was defrauded of approximately \$174,216 as a result of this illegal conduct. The cases are being prosecuted by the offices of Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson; Benton J. Campbell, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Housing funds are a valuable resource that need to be protected for New Yorkers eligible to receive them. Through these investigations, DOI preserves these precious taxpayer funds and ensures that those responsible are brought to justice. We will continue to work with state and federal prosecutors to stop this wrongdoing."

The following individuals were arrested today, Wednesday, March 10, 2010, and the office of Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting their cases :

- VENISE GOODWIN, 49, of the Bronx, is charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and three counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison and a class E felony by up to four years in prison.

According to the criminal complaint, GOODWIN participated in NYCHA's Section 8 program between 2004 and 2007, in which her rent in a privately-owned apartment in the Bronx was determined, in part, on the income and household composition she reported to NYCHA. NYCHA paid the subsidies directly to the defendant's landlord. DOI's investigation found that GOODWIN failed to report her income from her job with the City Health and Hospitals Corporation ("HHC"); the defendant has been an HHC employee since November 2003; and between 2004 and 2007 the defendant earned between \$27,736 and \$32,259 as an HHC employee. As a result of these misrepresentations, GOODWIN defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$18,266 between October 2004 and October 2007.

- CARMEN OLIVIERI, 38, of the Bronx, is charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, class D felonies, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony.

According to the criminal complaint, OLIVIERI received Section 8 subsidies from NYCHA for a privately-owned apartment in the Bronx. DOI's investigation found that OLIVIERI earned between \$1,500 during a two month period in 2005 up to an annual income of \$22,231 in 2008; she failed to report to NYCHA her income and the income of her son who also resided in the Section 8 apartment. As a result of those misrepresentations, OLIVIERI defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$15,310 between December 2006 and February 2009.

- MOHAMMED RAJI, 42, of the Bronx, was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Third Degree, class D felonies; Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, Welfare Fraud in the Fourth Degree, Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fourth Degree, and four counts each of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree and Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, class E felonies; and Petit Larceny, Welfare Fraud in the Fifth Degree and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fifth Degree, class A misdemeanors. Upon conviction, a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration.

According to the criminal complaint, RAJI received Section 8 subsidies from NYCHA for a privately-owned apartment in the Bronx. DOI's investigation found that while the defendant was reporting income of approximately \$22,000 he was receiving income of more than \$51,000 between 2006 and 2008; allowed a friend to move into his Section 8-subsidized apartment; and owned a home in the Bronx. As a result of this illegal conduct, RAJI defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$20,976 in Section 8 subsidies between February 2006 and March 2009.

The following individual was arrested on Tuesday, March 9, 2010 and the office of Benton J. Campbell, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, is prosecuting the case:

- LASHANDA NAVARRO, 36, of Bethlehem, PA, was charged with Theft of Public Funds. Upon conviction, this federal crime is punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

According to the criminal complaint, NAVARRO was a participant in NYCHA's Section 8 program, which is funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. DOI's investigation found that NAVARRO received Section 8 subsidies for a privately-owned apartment in Brooklyn. The investigation found that in 2007 and 2008 the defendant reported to NYCHA she was living in the apartment, when, in fact, she had moved to Pennsylvania prior to October 2006. The investigation also found that the defendant sublet the Section 8-subsidized apartment to another individual between October 2006 and March 2009. As a result of failing to report this information to NYCHA, NAVARRO defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$31,530 in federal subsidies between June 2006 and March 2009.

The following individuals were arrested in February 2010 and the office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting these cases:

- MARGARITA ALVARADO, 58, of Brooklyn, was arrested on Thursday, February 18, 2010, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and four counts each of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies.

Between January 2005 and August 2008, ALVARADO was a participant in NYCHA's Section 8 housing program, in which her rent on a privately owned apartment was subsidized by NYCHA and paid directly to her landlord. Those subsidies were determined, in part, by the household composition and income ALVARADO reported to NYCHA. DOI's investigation found that ALVARADO failed to report to NYCHA that her husband resided in the apartment and he earned income that ranged between \$11,220 and \$25,512 between 2004 and 2007. As a result of those misrepresentations, between January 2005 and August 2008, ALVARADO defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$13,515 in rental subsidies.

- CAROLYN FRANKS, 56, of Brooklyn, was arrested on Thursday, February 18, 2010, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and four counts each of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies.

FRANKS was a resident of NYCHA's Gravesend Houses in Brooklyn and her rent was based, in part, on the household composition and income she reported to NYCHA. DOI's investigation found that FRANKS failed to report that her daughter resided in the apartment and that her daughter earned income with the New York City Police Department, which ranged between \$6,178 and \$37,939 between 2005 and 2008. As a result of those misrepresentations, between August 2005 and July 2008, FRANKS defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$14,675 in rental subsidies.

- DIANNA LEE ADAMS, 50, of Brooklyn, was arrested on Wednesday, February 17, 2010, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and four counts each of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies.

ADAMS was a resident of NYCHA's Ocean Hill/Saratoga Houses, and her rent was based, in part, on the household composition and income she reported to NYCHA. DOI's investigation found that: ADAMS was an unauthorized tenant of the apartment but submitted affidavits of income to NYCHA posing as the authorized tenant; NYCHA denied an application from the authorized tenant to add ADAMS as a tenant, and ADAMS failed to report to NYCHA her presence or her income from the City Department of Education ("DOE"). The investigation found that ADAMS received income from DOE of between \$14,804 and \$36,762 between 2000 and 2008. As a result of these misrepresentations, between June 2000 and April 2009, ADAMS defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$32,560 in rental subsidies.

- LINDA WRIGHT-JOHNSON, 48, of Brooklyn, was arrested on Wednesday, February 17, 2010, and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and four counts each of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, class E felonies.

WRIGHT-JOHNSON was a resident of NYCHA's Park Rock Consolidated apartments and her rent was based, in part, on the household composition and income she reported to NYCHA. DOI's investigation found that WRIGHT-JOHNSON failed to report her husband's presence in the apartment and his income, which ranged between \$39,663 and \$50,729 between 2002 and 2007. As a result of these misrepresentations, between January 2003 and December 2008, WRIGHT-JOHNSON defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$27,384 in rental subsidies.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked Bronx County District Attorney Robert T. Johnson, Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York Benton J. Campbell, NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea, HHC President Alan D. Aviles and HHC's Inspector General Norman Dion, DOE Chancellor Joel I. Klein, Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, and their staffs, for their assistance in these investigations.

These investigations were conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for NYCHA, specifically Inspector General for NYCHA, Kelvin Jeremiah, and members of his staff, including Counsel Kevin R. Smith, Deputy Counsel Laureen Hintz, Senior Deputy Inspector General Ralph Iannuzzi, Deputy Inspectors General Anthony Capek and Osa Omoigui, First Assistant Inspector General Rosemary Caruso, Assistant Inspectors General Suzanne Vitti and Robin Jacknow, Chief Investigator J. Graham Forbes, Special Investigators Virginia Arana and Patricia Sedacca, and Confidential Investigators Martin Lintner, Tiffany Simmons and Beth-Ann Permuy.

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.

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