



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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Release # 30-2004
nyc.gov/html/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2004

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MANHATTAN RESIDENT ARRESTED IN \$10K HOUSING FRAUD
-- Teacher at private school concealed income --

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of a New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA") resident for unlawfully obtaining \$10,373 in rent subsidies.

ELIEZER BERRIOS has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree by the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. If convicted, BERRIOS faces up to seven years in prison.

ELIEZER BERRIOS, 49, tenant of record since 1985 in a 5-room apartment in NYCHA's Washington/Lexington Houses in Spanish Harlem, Manhattan, allegedly filed Affidavits of Income with NYCHA alleging that from 1993 through 2000 his sole source of income, which ranged from \$11,076 to \$15,620, derived solely from his part-time employment with the Union Settlement Association, where he worked as an adult counselor. However, DOI investigators determined that BERRIOS also worked as a full-time teacher with the Union Settlement Association and actually earned between \$20,253 and \$29,037 per year. This underreported income meant that BERRIOS paid anywhere from \$294 to \$619 a month in rent when he should have been paying anywhere from \$498 to \$619 per month.

These arrests are part of an ongoing City-wide crackdown by DOI and New York area prosecutors that have resulted since 1995 in the arrest of 340 residents, including 109 City, State, and Federal employees, who were charged with stealing more than \$6.6 million in rent and welfare subsidies by hiding their income and assets from the City. So far, 244 cases have resulted in convictions and over \$3.4 million in restitution. Since January 2004 alone, 45 individuals have been arrested for illegally receiving over \$700,000 in government housing benefits.

This investigation was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner and NYCHA Inspector General Steven A. Pasichow and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Edward Glander and Special Investigator Anthony Capek. Commissioner Gill Hearn also thanked NYCHA's Manhattan Borough Management Department for its assistance in the investigation.

Criminal complaints are merely an accusation. 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 311 or DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.