



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

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

Release 72-2004
nyc.gov/html/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2004

CONTACT: EMILY GEST
(212) 825-5931

DOI ARRESTS TWO SEASONAL CITY EMPLOYEES FOR "UNEMPLOYMENT" SCAM

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the felony arrests of DEBORAH BATTLE and DAVID PAYDEN, two seasonal City employees who illegally collected more than \$28,000 in unemployment insurance benefits while also receiving City salaries.

BATTLE, 44, a School Crossing Guard with the New York City Police Department was arrested today pursuant to a criminal complaint charging her with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, for fraudulently collecting \$8,613.12 in unemployment insurance benefits. PAYDEN, 41, an Assistant City Highway Repairer with the New York City Department of Transportation, was arrested on November 4, 2004 pursuant to a criminal complaint that charged him with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree for fraudulently collecting \$19,573.25 in unemployment insurance benefits. If convicted, PAYDEN and BATTLE each face up to seven years in jail.

Seasonal City employees are entitled to collect unemployment insurance benefits when they are not working. To collect benefits during their off-season, the employees must file for unemployment insurance benefits with the New York State Department of Labor (DOL), and then access a computerized telephone system to verify electronically that they are entitled to collect unemployment insurance benefits for a particular week. The State DOL computerized telephone system specifically asks employees whether they worked on the days for which they seek unemployment insurance benefits. The information given to the DOL computerized telephone system generates the unemployment insurance checks sent to the employees. The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) reimburses the State for unemployment insurance benefits paid to City employees.

According to Commissioner Gill Hearn, these arrests are part of a continuing investigation which has resulted in the arrests of 90 City employees since June 1999 who have been charged with stealing a total of \$260,000 in unemployment insurance benefits while also receiving City salaries.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DCAS Commissioner Martha Hirst and her staff for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation. In addition, Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked the employees of the New York State Department of Labor and members of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office Detective Squad for their assistance with the investigation and arrests, respectively.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for DCAS Robert Joyce and members of his staff, as well as Supervising Investigator Cassandra Cameron-White. These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Adler Bernard, under the supervision of Leroy Frazer, Bureau Chief of the Special Prosecutions Bureau of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

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.