



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

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

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CONTACT: EMILY GEST
(212) 825-5931

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER ARRESTED FOR DEFRAUDING NYCHA OF MORE THAN \$70K
-- They concealed their City hospital jobs to receive housing benefits for which they don't qualify --

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of PHYLLIS HILL and her daughter, VIVIAN HILL, for fraudulently receiving over \$70,000 in housing benefits after they allegedly concealed their employment with Coler-Goldwater Memorial Hospital, which is part of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation.

PHYLLIS, 50, and her daughter VIVIAN, 30, have each been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. If convicted, each faces up to seven years in prison.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Today's charges indicate that neither mother nor daughter ever learned that it doesn't pay to lie or steal. They've learned the hard way that housing scams don't work. Government-funded housing is designed to help people in need not for those who think they can abuse the system."

PHYLLIS HILL, 50, has been the tenant of record of a 4-room apartment at the New York City Housing Authority's ("NYCHA") Queensbridge North Houses in Long Island City, Queens since 1979. Since at least 1994, PHYLLIS has earned anywhere from \$26,520 to \$35,481 a year while working as a food service supervisor for Coler-Goldwater Hospital. However, she told NYCHA since 1994 that her only source of income was the approximately \$600 a month she received from an acquaintance. As a result, she paid between \$140 and \$381 a month in rent from April 1994 through January 2003 when she should have paid \$619/month, the maximum possible for an apartment that size. As a result, PHYLLIS has been charged with unlawfully obtaining \$46,353 in rent subsidies.

VIVIAN HILL, 30, has been the tenant of record of her own 3-room apartment in the same housing development as her mother since 1993. However, since 1997, VIVIAN has worked as a Dietary Aide with Coler-Goldwater, earning between \$8,130 and \$28,125 per year. Like her mother, VIVIAN failed to report her employment to NYCHA. Instead, she either reported that she was unemployed or that her sole source of income consisted of monthly child support. As a result, VIVIAN's rent from November 1997 through March 2004 ranged from \$95 to \$129 per month. However, she should have paid \$421 per month; the maximum rent for an apartment that size. VIVIAN has been charged with unlawfully obtaining \$24,044 in rent subsidies.

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 372 residents, including 117 City, State, and Federal employees, who were charged with stealing more than \$7.2 million in rent and welfare subsidies by hiding their income and assets from the City. Since January alone, 77 individuals have been arrested for illegally receiving over \$1.3 million in government housing benefits. So far, 278 cases have resulted in convictions and over \$3.7 million in court-imposed restitution.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn thanked NYCHA's Queens Borough Management Department for their assistance in the investigations and arrests.

These investigations were conducted by NYCHA Inspector General Judith F. Abruzzo and members of her staff, including Deputy Inspector General Bergia Telesford, Assistant Inspector General James Hylton, Special Investigator Christopher France and Assistant Counsel Lauren Hintz.

The Office of Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown is prosecuting the cases. Assistant District Attorney Christine Burke, under the supervision of Gregory Pavlides of District Attorney Brown's Economic Crimes Bureau, is handling the prosecutions.

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.

DEFENDANT INFORMATION

1. Phyllis Hill, 50, of 40-15 Vernon Boulevard, Queens (\$46,353 in rent subsidies).
2. Vivian Hill, 30, of 40-01 Vernon Boulevard, Queens (\$24,044 in rent subsidies).

Total fraud amount: \$70,397.

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To report someone ripping off the city, call 311 or DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.*