



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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Release # 84-2006
nyc.gov/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2006

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11 PEOPLE, INCLUDING TWO CITY EMPLOYEES, CHARGED WITH STEALING \$76,000 FROM HRA
- Temporary employees were paid for days they never worked -

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrests of 11 people, who had been placed as temporary workers with City agencies through contracts with the City's Human Resources Administration (HRA), for allegedly forging their supervisors' signatures and altering their own timesheets in order to be paid for a total of 7,899 hours, resulting in payments of \$76,149.78, for work they did not do for the City. Each defendant allegedly stole anywhere from \$767 to nearly \$12,700. The defendants have been arrested over the last week. A twelfth defendant is expected to surrender.

Eight of the 12 defendants had been paid by HRA under the Welfare to Work Division, a pilot program for public assistance clients who are at the end of their eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and are preparing to enter the workforce. These defendants had been assigned to perform building maintenance and clerical duties at HRA, the New York City Police Department (NYPD), Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), and the Department of Education (DOE). The remaining four defendants had been hired through a temporary employment agency under contract with HRA and performed clerical work at several HRA offices. The defendants have been charged variously with Petit Larceny, Grand Larceny in the Third and Fourth Degrees, Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, and Falsifying Business Records in the Second Degree. The defendants face sentences ranging from one to seven years.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "These defendants allegedly tried to fatten their wallets at the taxpayers' expense, and, as a result, they face a lighter wallet in the absence of a paycheck, and also the very serious prospect of a criminal record. All City employees, no matter what their rank, title or background is, should conduct themselves honestly and honorably out of respect for the government and the taxpayers. I commend the alert HRA timekeeper who discovered the alleged fraud, which was then reported to DOI."

Among the defendants:

- 1) VICKIE BERRY, 35, of Brooklyn, who worked as a clerk at the Greenwood Job Center in Brooklyn, and allegedly forged 41 timesheets between January 2002 and October 2002 and was paid \$12,669.44 for 1,414 hours of work she did not perform. She has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, and faces up to seven years in prison.
- 2) BARBARA GIRAUD, 39, of the Bronx, who worked as a custodial trainee at the NYPD's Bronx Central Booking in the Bronx Criminal Court House, allegedly forged 38 timesheets between January and October of 2002, and was paid \$11,784.50 for 1,295 hours she did not work. GIRAUD has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Falsifying Business Records, and faces up to seven years in prison.
- 3) CHERYL BRYANT, 43, of the Bronx, who worked as a clerk at the Bronx Concourse Job Center, allegedly forged 37 timesheets between February 2002 and October 2002, and was paid \$11,038.72 for 1,232 hours she did not work. After participating in the program, BRYANT found a job as a caretaker at

the New York City Housing Authority's Twin Parks Houses in the Bronx. BRYANT has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Falsifying Business Records, and faces up to seven years in prison.

- 4) LEMA EADES, 41, of the Bronx, who worked as a custodial trainee at the Yorkville Job Center, allegedly forged 21 timesheets between February 2002 and October 2002, resulting in payments of \$6,388.20 for 702 hours of work she did not perform. Since June 2006, EADES has been employed as a custodial trainee by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation at Rainy Park in the Bronx. EADES has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Falsifying Business Records, and faces up to seven years in prison.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked HRA Commissioner Verna Eggleston and her staff for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Assistant Commissioner Benjamin Defibaugh and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Joseph Caputo and Special Investigator Anthony DeLeo.

These defendants are being prosecuted by the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

Criminal complaints are merely 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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