



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
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**FORMER DOHMH EMPLOYEE ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY STEALING GIFT CARDS
THAT WERE INCENTIVES FOR A DOHMH MATERNAL INFANT PROGRAM**
--Individual allegedly took gift cards valued at \$2,000--

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), announced the arrest of a Principal Administrative Associate assigned to the Police Department within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), for allegedly stealing 100 gift cards for use at the store Target, valued at \$20 each. The DOHMH uses the cards as incentives for women to attend prenatal health programs. The arrest was jointly made by DOI and the DOHMH Police Department.

JESSICA CRUZ, 26, of Brooklyn, was charged with Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Fourth Degree, both class E felonies. If convicted, she faces up to four years in prison.

CRUZ had been an employee of DOHMH Police for 10 months and earned approximately \$31,900 during that time. CRUZ was terminated from DOHMH on December 4, 2007.

Today's arrest was the result of a joint investigation by DOI and the DOHMH Police Department into the disappearance of a package containing 100 Target gift cards. According to the criminal complaint, the DOHMH Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health Program purchased 100 \$20 gift cards from Target to distribute as incentives for participation in the program. The investigation found that the gift cards were delivered on Oct. 12, 2007 and signed by a person named "Cruz." The investigation also found that 91 of the cards were used as of October 21, 2007 for purchases totaling \$1,874. CRUZ admitted that she received the 100 gift cards -- a total of \$2,000 -- signed for them and used them to make purchases, according to the criminal complaint.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "These gift cards were supposed to aid those who attend prenatal health programs, not provide money for an illegal shopping spree. As these allegations show, individuals who steal from the City face serious consequences, including potential jail time."

Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, DOHMH Commissioner, said, "I want to thank the Department of Investigation for its work and the Health Department employees whose vigilance brought this to light. Virtually all Health Department employees are dedicated, honest, hard working public servants. We will not tolerate any actions that violate the public's trust."

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked the DOHMH Commissioner, Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, for his and his office's cooperation, and praised DOHMH Police Department Chief Thomas Breuers and his staff, including Lieutenant William Hayward and Detective Gary Ortalano.

The defendant is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Clara Henderson of the Office of New York County District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau's Special Prosecutions Bureau, under the supervision of Bureau Chief Tom Wornom.

DOI's Inspector General for DOHMH, Christopher Staackmann and his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Stephan Zander and Special Investigator Danielle Caruso assisted 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 DOI at (212) 825-5959.**