



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

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

Release #93-2009
nyc.gov/html/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

CONTACT: DIANE STRUZZI
(212) 825-5931

**DOI ARRESTS THREE INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING A CITY EMPLOYEE, CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING
THE CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY OF TENS-OF-THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrests today of three individuals in two separate cases on charges of defrauding the New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA") of a total of \$44,434 by concealing household income or misrepresenting their household composition. The office of Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown is prosecuting these cases.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "In the past six weeks alone, DOI's housing fraud investigations have resulted in 11 arrests involving the charged theft of more than \$200,000 in public funds. We will continue as necessary. Housing fraud is a crime that deprives needy families of limited subsidies and will result in arrest and prosecution."

EDDIE MARTINEZ, 34, and LORGIA RODRIGUEZ, 32, both of Astoria, Queens, were each charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony, and multiple counts each of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, both class E felonies. Upon conviction, a class D felony is punishable by up to seven years in prison and a class E felony is punishable by up to four years in prison.

According to the criminal complaints, between 2004 and 2009, RODRIGUEZ and MARTINEZ, a NYCHA caretaker, resided together in an apartment in NYCHA'S Astoria Houses, although RODRIGUEZ filed documents with NYCHA falsely stating that she was the only adult residing there, and MARTINEZ filed documents with NYCHA reporting that he resided in a different apartment in NYCHA'S Queensbridge North Houses. DOI'S investigation found that, in fact, MARTINEZ sublet his NYCHA apartment to another individual and that by failing to report MARTINEZ'S annual income from his City employment and his occupancy in RODRIGUEZ'S apartment, MARTINEZ and RODRIGUEZ defrauded NYCHA of \$19,284 in rental payments between July 2004 and April 2009.

MARTINEZ has been employed with NYCHA since February 1999 and in 2008 received a salary of approximately \$42,457.

JIMMY ORTIZ, 41, of the Bronx, was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and three counts each of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree.

According to the criminal complaint, ORTIZ was a NYCHA Section 8 recipient in Richmond Hill, Queens between July 2004 and January 2008. His rent in a privately-owned apartment was subsidized by NYCHA and determined, in part, by the household income and composition that he reported to NYCHA. DOI'S investigation found that between 2004 and 2007, ORTIZ failed to report income of between \$25,840 and \$31,852 from his

employment at job placement agencies. As a result of concealing that income, ORTIZ defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$25,150 in rental subsidies.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea and Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, and their staffs, for their assistance in these investigations.

These investigations were conducted by NYCHA Acting Inspector General Kelvin Jeremiah and members of his staff, including Senior Deputy Inspector General Ralph Iannuzzi, Deputy Inspector General Bergia Telesford, First Assistant Inspector General Rosemary Caruso, Assistant Inspector General Suzanne Vitti, Special Investigator Stephen Mattei, and Confidential Investigator Thomas Kaleda.

Assistant District Attorney Rosemary Buccheri, of the Queens County District Attorney's Office, has been assigned to the prosecutions, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Gregory Pavlides of the Economic Crimes Bureau.

Criminal complaints are 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.

DOI's press releases can also be found at twitter.com/doinews
Get the worms out of the Big Apple. To report someone ripping off the City, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.