



## **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Guilty Plea Of Former Non-Profit Employee For Diverting \$400,000 For Personal Use**

*Former Human Resources Manager Of Hope Community Inc. Will Be Sentenced To 1-3 Years In  
Prison*

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the guilty plea of the former Human Resources Manager of the non-profit Hope Community, Inc., Chantel Rodriguez Pierre, for using her position to steal over \$400,000 from the organization. Hope Community owns and operates low-income housing in Manhattan and is currently under contract with the New York City Department of Homeless Services for \$8.9 million over five years to operate a homeless shelter for families. Rodriguez Pierre admitted that from June 2014 to February 2016, she manipulated the payroll system in order to issue bogus vacation time and additional reimbursements to employees at Hope Community. Instead of sending the money to the employees of the organization, Rodriguez Pierre ended up sending the money into accounts that she controlled. Rodriguez Pierre pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, and will be sentenced on April 13, 2017 to 1 to 3 years in state prison. Pursuant to a plea agreement, Rodriguez Pierre waived her right to appeal and agreed to pay restitution over time. Rodriguez Pierre pleaded guilty yesterday in front of Acting Supreme Court Justice Abraham Clott.

“We will not let non-profit employees use their organizations for personal financial gain,” said **Attorney General Schneiderman**. “We will continue to work with our partners in government to ensure that taxpayer dollars are put to good use.”

**DOI Commissioner Mark G. Peters** said, “Enriching oneself by diverting funds from a not-for-profit that provides shelter for the City's homeless is nothing short of shameful. DOI is pleased that through its partnership with the New York State Attorney General's Office this defendant will now pay for her crimes.”

The Attorney General would like to thank the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance for their assistance with the investigation.

The case was investigated by Investigator Sixto Santiago under the supervision of Deputy Chief John McManus of the Investigations Bureau, which is led by Chief Dominick Zarrella and DOI's Inspector General for City-funded Not-for-Profits, specifically Special Counsel Inna Spector and

Auditor Jeffrey Freeman, under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General/Chief Forensic Auditor Ivette Morales, Inspector General Andrew Brunsten, Associate Commissioner Susan Lambiase, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Michael Carroll, and First Deputy Commissioner Lesley Brovner.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General John Chiara, Special Counsel of the Public Integrity Bureau, with assistance provided by former Legal Support Analyst Casey Lasda and Legal Support Analyst Graham Louis. Forensic auditing analysis was provided by Forensic Auditor Kristina Kojamian under the supervision of Deputy Chief Sandy Bizzarro of the Forensic Audit Section, which is led by Chief Edward J. Keegan, Jr. The Public Integrity Bureau is led by Bureau Chief Daniel G. Cort and Deputy Bureau Chief Stacy Aronowitz.

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