



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS DAY CARE PROVIDER APPLICANT ON CHARGES OF FORGING A TRAINING CERTIFICATE
--Arrest is based on a report to DOI from DOHMH--

Margaret Garnett, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrest today of a day care provider applicant charged with submitting a forged document to the City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene ("DOHMH") that misrepresented her training qualifications. DOHMH regulates the operation of child care establishments in New York City. The forged document was submitted with the defendant's online application to operate a Group Family Day Care establishment in Manhattan. The application was denied. DOI began this investigation after DOHMH reported to DOI the defendant's training certificate contained a discrepancy. The office of New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., is prosecuting this case.

STEPHANIE GUZMAN, 34, of New York, N.Y., is charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, a class D Felony, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E Felony. 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.

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett said, "Parents place their faith in child care operators to care for and protect their children and that means documents submitted to the City supporting the operation of these establishments must be truthful and accurate. Fortunately, DOHMH identified a discrepancy associated with this individual's application and reported it to DOI, preventing an unqualified provider from opening her doors. There is no tolerance for cutting corners when it comes to our children's health and safety. I thank DOHMH for their partnership on this investigation."

According to the criminal complaint and DOI's investigation, in October 2018 GUZMAN submitted to DOHMH an application to become a Group Family Day Care provider. Attached to that application was an applicant compliance agreement stating that the defendant had not forged or altered any documents submitted as part of the application and that the submission of forged or altered application documents may be a felony or misdemeanor. As part of this application, GUZMAN was required by New York State to take a 15-hour Health and Safety Training course and to provide a valid certificate of completion to DOHMH. This training covers topics such as safety and security procedures, as well as child abuse and maltreatment identification and prevention. The investigation determined that GUZMAN'S Health and Safety training certificate was fraudulent because it relied on an outdated template and there was no record of the defendant receiving training. As a result of this discrepancy, GUZMAN'S application was denied and the matter was referred to DOI for further investigation. DOI's findings confirmed the entire training certificate was fraudulent and the defendant had never been properly trained.

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Commissioner Garnett thanked DOHMH Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot and her staff for their assistance and partnership in this investigation. Commissioner Garnett also thanked New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr. and his staff for their prosecution of this matter.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DOHMH, specifically Confidential Investigator Eric Knapp and Special Investigator Willy Gomez, under the supervision of Assistant Inspector General Michael Morris, Deputy Inspectors General David Jordan and Mary Kozlow, Inspectors General Clinton Daggan and Ann Petterson, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel Cort.

The office of New York County District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., is prosecuting the case, specifically Assistant District Attorney Steven Harrison, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Lisa Del Pizzo, Bureau Chief of Trial Bureau 30.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. 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 strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

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