

## CYRUS R. VANCE JR., DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 4, 2021 Contact: Emily Tuttle, <u>tuttlee@dany.nyc.gov</u>

## D.A. VANCE, D.O.I.: DIRECTOR OF CONTRACTS AT NEW YORK CITY HEALTH + HOSPITALS CORPORATION CHARGED WITH PUBLIC CORRUPTION

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., and Department of Investigation ("DOI") Commissioner Margaret Garnett today announced the indictment of EUGENE ROBERSON, 54, a Director of Contracts for New York City Health + Hospitals Corporation ("HHC"), for stealing \$64,000 from HHC between March 2018 and June 2021, and filing several false bank statements with DOI. ROBERSON is charged in a New York State Supreme Court indictment with Public Corruption, Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, and five counts each of Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. "Stewards of City funds must be held to the highest possible ethical standards," said District Attorney Vance. "As alleged, this Director of Contracts shirked his duties and padded his pockets with money intended to pay rent to New York City Health + Hospitals. Together with our partners at DOI, we are committed to ensuring honest dealings in our City agencies, and will continue to sniff out fraud wherever it may be."

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett said, "This senior-level, long-time Health + Hospitals (H+H) employee is charged with using public funds as if they were his own, depositing checks meant for H+H into his personal bank account. A tip from a City employee started this investigation, underscoring the value of City employees reporting wrongdoing and corruption, as they are mandated to do. I commend

this employee for stepping up and doing the right thing. DOI will be working with H+H to strengthen the internal controls that govern the process this defendant exploited, specifically the payment of concessions at H+H hospitals. DOI thanks the Manhattan District Attorney's Office for its partnership on this case and H+H for its cooperation in this investigation."

According to court documents and statements made on the record, ROBERSON is the Director of Contracts for HHC facilities at five New York City hospitals. In this role, ROBERSON managed vendor contracts for 542 Café, also known as "Moonstruck," and Imperial Parking, also known as "Impark," which both rent retail space at Bellevue Hospital.

In December 2020, DOI investigators interviewed ROBERSON about financial improprieties with Imperial Parking, including allegations that ROBERSON was receiving free parking. ROBERSON was asked to provide bank documents to support his claim that he was paying for parking at the garage. ROBERSON submitted to DOI five forged bank statements from one of his personal bank accounts, which were altered to falsely show payments to the parking garage vendor from ROBERSON.

In addition, other financial records revealed that between March 2018 and June 2021, ROBERSON deposited 32 rent checks, totaling \$64,000, from 542 Café to HHC into his own personal bank accounts. He then used these funds to pay for personal expenses, such as dining, shopping, travel and rent. According to HHC, ROBERSON did not have permission or authority to deposit the checks into his personal accounts or use the funds for personal use.

Assistant D.A.s Bonnie Seok and Jena Tiernan are handling the prosecution of the case under the supervision of Assistant D.A.s Julio Cuevas (Deputy Bureau Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau), Steve Pilnyak (Principal Deputy Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau), Julieta V. Lozano (Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau), and Gloria Garcia (Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division), and Executive Assistant D.A. Christopher Conroy (Chief of the Investigations Division). Principal Financial Investigator Evelyn Marrero, and Paralegals Clara Parkus, Anna Kuritzkes, Andrew Rubin, and Matthew Martinez provided analysis and assistance in the investigation. Senior Rackets Investigator Thomas Piazza and Supervisory Rackets Investigator Veronica Rodriguez also assisted in the matter.

DOI's investigation was conducted by the Office of Inspector General for H + H, specifically Senior Special Investigator Glenn Russo, Special Investigator Winston Harrison and Confidential Investigators Christopher Bender and Joseph Pira, under the supervision of Chief Investigator Peter Mills, Assistant Inspector General Kristin McMorrow, First Deputy Inspector General Philip Hung and Inspector General Neil Clancy.

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Defendant information

EUGENE ROBERSON

Secaucus, New Jersey

Charges:

- Public Corruption, a class B felony, one count
- Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, a class C felony, one count
- Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a class D felony, five counts
- Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony, five counts