



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**EMPLOYEE OF THE NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER CHARGED
WITH STEALING LUXURY BAG FROM DECEDENT'S HOME**

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrest of an employee of the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner ("OCME") on misdemeanor charges in connection with the theft of a Louis Vuitton bag that belonged to a decedent whose body was in the care and custody of OCME. A referral from OCME to DOI prompted this investigation; which DOI handled in partnership with OCME, the New York City Police Department ("NYPD") and the Office of Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, "OCME employees are trusted to handle difficult and sensitive work and their professionalism and integrity are of utmost importance. As charged, this City employee betrayed that trust when he used his access to a decedent's home and personal belongings to steal a luxury bag. I want to thank OCME for its immediate referral to DOI and its assistance on this matter, and our law enforcement partners, the NYPD and Manhattan District Attorney's Office, for their swift work on this investigation."

TREVOR RHEAMS, 49, of Jamaica, N.Y., was arrested on October 26, 2022 and charged with Petit Larceny and Official Misconduct, both class A misdemeanors. Upon conviction, both of these offenses are punishable by up to one year's incarceration. The charges against RHEAMS did not become public until his presentation in New York County Criminal Court today, where he was arraigned and released on his own recognizance. His next court date is scheduled for January 10, 2023.

According to the criminal complaint, on August 9, 2022, RHEAMS, an OCME Motor Vehicle Operator, was assigned to drive an OCME vehicle to transport decedents to OCME headquarters in Manhattan; RHEAMS arrived at the decedent's apartment with an OCME colleague. An NYPD Officer also was present in the apartment that evening, and the Officer's body-worn camera showed a Louis Vuitton bag in the kitchen. RHEAMS was left alone in the apartment for a period of time and the OCME colleague in the apartment did not observe RHEAMS while he was sealing the body bag. The next day, another OCME employee cleaned and inspected the OCME vehicle assigned to RHEAMS and observed a pillowcase on the passenger-side floor. Inside the pillowcase was a Louis Vuitton bag, with a tag bearing the same last name as the decedent.

RHEAMS, a Motor Vehicle Operator, has been employed by OCME since May 2007 and receives an annual salary of approximately \$49,000. He has been on modified duty since August 10, 2022.

Commissioner Strauber thanked Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg and his staff for their prosecution of this matter, specifically Assistant District Attorney Daniel Passeser and Chief of the Major Economic Crimes Bureau Assistant District Attorney Julieta V. Lozano. Commissioner Strauber also thanked

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NYPD Commissioner Keechant L. Sewell and her staff for their partnership on this investigation as well as OCME Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Jason Graham, MD and his staff for their cooperation in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by the NYPD Detective Squad assigned to DOI, and under the supervision of Assistant Inspector General Shakina Griffith, First Deputy Inspector General Mary Kozlow, Inspector General Clinton Daggan, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella, and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel G. Cort.

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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