



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**CITY DEP EMPLOYEE CHARGED WITH MAKING THREATENING AND ABUSIVE CALLS
TO CUSTOMERS WHO CALLED WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR WATER BILLS**

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), announced the arrest of LAMONT JACKSON, a Clerical Associate in the Customer Services Bureau of the City Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”), on charges of Aggravated Harassment in the Second Degree in connection with abusive, profane, and threatening calls made to two DEP customers who called the agency about water usage bills. JACKSON is assigned to work in the DEP Customer Services Bureau at 250 Livingston Street in Brooklyn; his responsibilities included responding to customer inquiries. After speaking with the defendant in his capacity as a customer services representative, two customers received abusive telephone calls from a blocked number. DOI was informed of the incidents by DEP and investigated with the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office, which is prosecuting this case.

JACKSON, 50, of the Bronx, N.Y., was arrested Wednesday, April 19, and charged with three counts of Aggravated Harassment in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor. During Wednesday’s arrest of JACKSON, eight glassines containing cocaine were found on the defendant and he was also charged with Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Seventh Degree, which is a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction, a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year’s incarceration.

JACKSON was arraigned today, April 20, in Kings County Criminal Court and released on his own recognizance. A judge granted the prosecution’s request for orders of protection for the two customers who received the threatening calls. JACKSON’s next court date is June 12, 2023.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, “As charged, this defendant’s disturbing and harassing behavior is unacceptable under any circumstances, but particularly for a City employee charged with responding to questions from members of the public. Fortunately, this conduct does not reflect the vast majority of City representatives who act with professionalism and provide courteous customer service to the countless New Yorkers that they assist. I thank the City Department of Environmental Protection for reporting this serious matter to DOI and the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office for working jointly with DOI on this investigation.”

Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez said, “Customers who contact City agencies deserve to be treated with respect. In this case, however, it is alleged that the defendant left disturbing messages for customers who he was supposed to be helping. I thank our prosecutors and DOI for their work on this case rooting out unwarranted harassment as alleged in this matter.”

According to the criminal complaint, JACKSON, a Clerical Associate in the Customer Services Bureau at DEP, has access to DEP’s records, which contain customers’ personal information, including home addresses and telephone numbers. On July 12, 2022, at about 1:25 p.m., a customer called DEP Customer Services to ask about a water bill. The call was assigned to JACKSON, who directed the customer to submit his inquiry to DEP in writing. The call concluded at about 1:29 p.m. At about 1:30 p.m., the customer received a call from a blocked number and

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did not answer. The caller, believed to be the defendant, left a profanity-filled message threatening to shoot the customer. At about 1:39 p.m., the same customer received a second telephone call from a blocked number. The customer did not answer and the caller, again believed to be the defendant, left a second profanity-filled voicemail that threatened the customer, indicating that the caller knew the customer's address saying, "Watch when I catch you." During the investigation, JACKSON's supervisor listened to the voicemails and identified JACKSON's voice on the recordings.

According to the criminal complaint, on September 14, 2022, a second customer called DEP Customer Services to inquire about a water bill; the call was assigned to JACKSON. Immediately after that call, the customer received a telephone call from a blocked number, which the customer answered. The caller, believed to be the defendant, directed a profanity at the customer and hung up. The investigation determined that the blocked number was placed from a location in the vicinity of Livingston and Schermerhorn streets, between Bond and Hoyt streets, in Brooklyn, near the DEP offices on Livingston Street where JACKSON was working on both July 12 and September 14, 2022. As alleged, these threatening calls caused both customers to be in fear of physical injury.

JACKSON has been employed by DEP since December 2017 and currently receives an hourly salary that totaled approximately \$34,720 in 2022. JACKSON still works in DEP's Customer Services Bureau on Livingston Street, but he is no longer permitted to have telephone contact with customers.

Commissioner Strauber thanked Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez and his staff for their collaboration on the investigation and prosecution of this case, which was handled by Assistant District Attorney Sara Walshe, under the supervision of Deputy Bureau Chief Adam Libove and Chief of the Public Integrity Bureau Laura Neubauer. Commissioner Strauber also thanked DEP Commissioner Rohit Aggarwala and his staff for their cooperation in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by Special Investigator Omar Sarach of DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the DEP, Assistant Inspector General Jordan Buff, Deputy Inspector General William Cheung, Deputy Inspector General Michael Antolini, and Inspector General Juve Hippolyte, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel G. Cort. DOI's NYPD Detective Squad assisted with the investigation.

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

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