



The City of New York
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Release #18-2024
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 2024

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FLORIDA WOMAN IS SENTENCED TO 42 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR DEFRAUDING NEW YORK CITY SNAP RECIPIENTS

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), issued a statement today on the sentencing of a Florida woman to 42 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for engaging in a years-long scheme to defraud at least 120 low-income New York City residents out of nearly \$50,000 in benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”), which provides low-income individuals with electronic benefits that can be used like cash to purchase food. DOI conducted this investigation with the office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, which is prosecuting the case.

GUYATREE SINGH, 51, of West Palm Beach, Florida, was charged by indictment in August 2023 with one count each of wire fraud and aggravated identity theft and pled guilty in January 2024 to both charges before U.S. District Judge Jed. S. Rakoff of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. Judge Rakoff sentenced the defendant today to 42 months followed by three years of supervised release.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, “This defendant posed as a New York State employee to prey on vulnerable New Yorkers, stealing their identities to gain access to their public benefits – funds that the victims needed to buy groceries. With today’s prison sentence, Guyatree Singh faces the consequences of her crimes, including theft of tens of thousands of dollars in public funds. I thank HRA for referring this matter to DOI, and our law enforcement partners in the Office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York for their commitment to hold accountable those who deplete public benefit programs of critical resources.”

According to the indictment, between April 2019 and May 2023, SINGH engaged in a scheme to defraud over 120 SNAP recipients, including many elderly individuals, of their SNAP benefits. In total, SINGH stole approximately \$49,754.52 in benefits to which the victims were entitled. SNAP recipients receive an electronic benefits transfer (“EBT”) card, which looks like a debit card and can be used to purchase food using SNAP benefits. SINGH called SNAP recipients and pretended to be a New York State employee working for SNAP and asked the victims for their personally identifiable information, including their dates of birth and social security numbers. Unbeknownst to the victims, SINGH then used this information to reset the personal identification numbers (“PINs”) on their EBT cards. Once the PINs were reset, SINGH used the victims’ EBT account numbers and new PINS to make purchases for herself at grocery stores in Florida using the victims’ SNAP funds.

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DOI Commissioner Strauber thanked U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Damian Williams, Assistant U.S. Attorney Adam Sowlati, in the Office's General Crimes Unit, who is in charge of the prosecution, and the Special Agents of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. Commissioner Strauber also thanked New York City Department of Social Services Commissioner Molly Wasow Park, whose agency oversees the New York City Human Resources Administration ("HRA"), which referred the matter to DOI.

At DOI, the case was investigated by Confidential Investigator Daniel Malvey and Investigative Auditor Tina Zhou, and was supervised by Assistant Inspector General Alexandra Davie, Deputy Inspector General Jeremy Reyes, Inspector General John Bellanie, Director of Audits Laila Jane Yu, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Christopher Ryan, and Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella.

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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