



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FISCAL ANALYST WITH THE CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE PLEADS GUILTY  
IN CONNECTION WITH STEALING GIFT CARDS MEANT FOR HIV & AIDS RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS  
— *Today's Guilty Plea is the third and final in connection with this investigation* —**

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), issued the following statement on the guilty pleas of three City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene ("DOHMH") employees: a Fiscal Analyst, a former Deputy Director of Fiscal Administration, and a former Program Planner, in connection with the theft of physical and electronic gift cards that DOHMH intended to distribute to HIV prevention program participants. DOI's investigation was prompted by an anonymous complaint about gift card fraud and was conducted jointly with the Office of Queens County District Attorney Melinda Katz, which is prosecuting the matter.

LISA BURGESS-THOMAS, 59, OF Bronx, N.Y., pled guilty today to Disorderly Conduct, a violation, and was sentenced to a Conditional Discharge, the conditions being that she resign from City service by February 23, 2024, and pay \$1,505 in restitution -- the amount of the DOHMH-issued gift cards that she used. BURGESS-THOMAS was one of three defendants who were each charged in August 2023 with Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a class E felony, and Official Misconduct, a class A misdemeanor. MAHBOOB BARI KHAN, 64, of New York, N.Y. a former DOHMH Deputy Director of Fiscal Administration at the time of his arrest, pled guilty in November 2023 to Disorderly Conduct and was sentenced to a Conditional Discharge, the condition being to pay \$2,200 in restitution, the amount of the DOHMH gift cards he used. STEPHANIE HUBBARD, 40, of New York, N.Y., a DOHMH Program Planner at the time of her arrest who resigned from her City position in October 2023, pled guilty in November 2023 to Disorderly Conduct and was sentenced to a Conditional Discharge, the condition being that she pay \$1,150 in restitution – the amount of the DOHMH-issued gift cards that she used.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, "These current and former City employees exploited the trust the City placed in them and misused gift cards meant for HIV prevention program participants. All three have agreed to repay the City the value of the gift cards at issue. I thank the Queens County District Attorney's Office for their commitment to protect resources that support valuable City programs and to hold accountable employees who use their City positions for personal profit."

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz said, "This is the last defendant charged in this case to be held to account for her actions. She and two other employees of the DOHMH took advantage of their trusted positions to enrich themselves by taking gift cards intended for attendees of an HIV prevention program. The court has ordered them to repay what was stolen. I want to thank the person who made this anonymous tip and the Department of Investigation for its diligence in righting this wrong."

Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasani said, "The bond between community and government is built on trust. The faith invested in our work cannot be taken for granted. Public servants must earn it every day by demonstrating decision-making that puts New Yorkers first. Any individuals who are responsible for misconduct must be held accountable. We appreciate the work of the Department of Investigation, which protects the faith invested in us as an agency."

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KHAN oversaw the ordering and distribution of gift cards for programs run by HIV Prevention, within the Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (“BHHS”), part of DOHMH’s Division of Disease Control. BURGESS-THOMAS directly reported to KHAN and was responsible for ordering, receiving and distributing both physical and electronic gift cards from the vendor Omnicard. Separately, HUBBARD also worked in HIV Prevention. The purpose of the gift cards is to encourage members of the public to participate in BHHS programs. DOHMH employees are not permitted to take gift cards for their personal use

DOI’s investigation found 38 total Visa and Mastercard gift cards that were ordered for HIV Prevention on KHAN’s desk; and these gift cards were valued at a total of \$950 when ordered but no longer had funds on them. The investigation also found an additional 32 Amazon electronic gift cards, valued at a total of \$800, that were uploaded to an Amazon account in KHAN’s name with a shipping address that matched the address in his personnel file. Another six Visa and Mastercard gift cards valued at a total of \$450 that were used in KHAN’s name were also found by investigators. KHAN admitted to using gift cards for personal transactions, including three transactions at Time Warner Cable.

Investigators discovered 32 purchases made with gift cards, a total of \$1,505, in the name of BURGESS-THOMAS, who admitted to using DOHMH gift cards for personal use. The investigation found that purchases were made in BURGESS-THOMAS’s name from Bath and Body Works, Apple iTunes, Amazon, and Walmart.

DOI’s investigation also found that that 23 physical Amazon gift cards purchased by BHHS, with a total value of \$1,150, were uploaded to an Amazon account in HUBBARD’s name, with a phone number and billing address matching the information in HUBBARD’s DOHMH personnel file.

BURGESS-THOMAS has worked for DOHMH since June 1989 and receives an annual salary of approximately \$94,847. KHAN, who began employment with DOHMH in April 1999, retired during this investigation in December 2022 with an annual salary of approximately \$110,754. HUBBARD worked for DOHMH since April 2016 and was receiving an annual salary of approximately \$127,682 when she resigned in October 2023.

Commissioner Strauber thanked Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, and Deputy Bureau Chief Christine Oliveri of the Public Integrity Bureau, and supervising Bureau Chief Khadijah Muhammad-Starling, who are handling the prosecution. Commissioner Strauber also thanked Dr. Ashwin Vasani, DOHMH Commissioner, and his staff for their cooperation.

At DOI, the investigation was conducted by First Deputy Inspector General Mary Kozlow under the supervision of Inspectors General Ann Petterson and Thomas Kapp, 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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