



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

80 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038
212-825-5900

Release #08R-2004
nyc.gov/html/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2004

CONTACT: Emily Gest
(212) 825-5931

DOI ARRESTS LANDLORD AND TENANT IN \$18,000 HOUSING FRAUD

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today that a landlord offering New York City-subsidized housing and his tenant have been charged with stealing more than \$18,000 in government rent subsidies.

VITO VACCARO, 42, of Queens, and JENNY MATEO, 25, of the Bronx, have both been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. If convicted, they each face up to seven years in jail.

The complaint charges that VACCARO and MATEO hatched a scheme to defraud the New York City Housing Authority by claiming that MATEO and her son had rented a three-bedroom apartment from VACCARO and needed NYCHA to subsidize MATEO's rent. Instead of living in the NYCHA-sanctioned Section 8 apartment, VACCARO lived with MATEO in his Whitestone, Queens home. VACCARO received rent subsidies of more than \$900 a month during their scam. From February 1, 2002 until September 1, 2003, NYCHA paid VACCARO a total of \$18,484 in rent subsidies for MATEO's rent. At the same time he received NYCHA money, VACCARO rented the apartment to another individual, who was not a Section 8 tenant and paid \$900-a-month in rent.

These arrests are part of an ongoing Citywide crackdown by DOI, local District Attorneys and United States Attorneys that has resulted since 1995 in the arrest of 297 residents who have been charged with stealing more than \$6 million in rent and welfare subsidies by hiding their income and assets from the City.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "These defendants have learned the perils of greedy behavior. Housing scams do not work. DOI investigates these types of cases so that tax payers' money is not wasted and so that those who need and qualify for affordable public housing will receive it."

The investigation was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner and NYCHA Inspector General Steven A. Pasichow and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Kevin Smith, Assistant Inspector Bergia Telesford, and Confidential Investigator Patricia Carvajal. The Office of Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is handling the case.

Criminal complaints are merely an accusation. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

One of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country, DOI investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. 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.

Get the worms out of the Big Apple.
To make complaints about someone ripping off the city, call 311 or DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.