



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE WELFARE INSPECTOR GENERAL

**Catherine Leahy Scott – Acting Welfare Inspector General**

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## **NEW YORK STATE WELFARE INSPECTOR GENERAL, STATEN ISLAND DISTRICT ATTORNEY ANNOUNCE ARREST OF NEW JERSEY BUSINESS OWNER FOR DEFRAUDING STATE OF MORE THAN \$62,000 IN WELFARE BENEFITS**

New York State Acting Welfare Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and Richmond County District Attorney Daniel M. Donovan Jr. announced the arrest of a Staten Island woman who was charged with stealing more than \$62,000 in public assistance benefits from New York State.

“Public assistance is meant for people who need it – which means when applicants file for benefits they must truthfully indicate their income and assets,” said Acting Welfare Inspector General Scott. “My office will work closely with District Attorney Donovan to ensure that justice is carried out and this individual is fully prosecuted. No one should be stealing from taxpayers – and certainly not from a program meant to assist people in need.”

Inspector General Scott’s investigators found that Inna Kulik, 43, of Staten Island fraudulently applied for and received cash assistance, food stamps benefits and Medicaid for herself and her child between July 2006 and 2010. To qualify for benefits, Kulik concealed income she received from her ownership interest in two New Jersey businesses as well as the purchase and ownership of two homes on Staten Island.

Kulik is charged with one count of second degree Grand Larceny, three counts of third degree Grand Larceny, one count of second degree Welfare Fraud, and three counts of first degree Offering a False Instrument for Filing.

District Attorney Donovan said: “Prosecutors in my Supreme Court Bureau and detectives in the RCDA’s NYPD Detective Squad diligently worked together with Acting Welfare Inspector General Scott’s investigations team on this case, resulting in this important arrest. My office will not tolerate fraud of any kind, but this type of fraud – taking money from programs designed to help the less fortunate when you’re gainfully employed – is inexcusable. Bad actors in Staten Island need to understand that they will not get away with stealing taxpayer dollars meant to help those who need it. They will be arrested and punished appropriately.”

Kulik was arraigned before the Justice Leonard P. Rienza of Richmond County Supreme Court on October 16, 2013. Kulik is being held on \$75,000 bail or bond. She is scheduled to reappear in court on November 7, 2013.

Acting Welfare Inspector General Scott thanked New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) Commissioner Robert Doar and HRA's Bureau of Fraud Investigations for their assistance throughout the Inspector General's investigation. Inspector General Scott also thanked District Attorney Donovan and his staff for prosecuting this case.

The Defendant is deemed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

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