



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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FORMER SUPERVISOR OF STATE GROUP HOMES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED INDICTED ON CHARGES OF STEALING IDENTITY OF RESIDENT IN HER CARE

CENTRAL ISLIP - New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas J. Spota today announced the indictment of a former supervisor of seven Long Island group homes for the developmentally disabled for identity theft in connection with her alleged use of a service recipient's personal information to obtain electric utility service for her own home.

Blossom Officer Thame, 56, of, Ridge, New York was indicted by a Suffolk County grand jury on the charges of Identify Theft in the Second Degree and Endangering the Welfare of an Incompetent Person in the First Degree, felonies. Thame was employed as a Treatment Team Leader for the State Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).

The indictment follows an investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott that revealed that Thame used her position as Treatment Team Leader to remove a service recipient from his residence and take him to PSE&G where she used his personal information to open an electricity service account under his name at her personal residence. The investigation determined Thame, since early March 2014, received more than \$1,400 worth of electric utility service at her residence using the name and information of the service recipient.

Separately, On April 3, 2015, Thame was charged with allegedly providing false information on an application for a New York State Driver License. She was charged with one count of Offering a False Instrument for Filing, a class E Felony. In that matter, Thame allegedly applied for a second license using the name "Blossom M. Officer-Thame" and failed to disclose that her license under the name "Blossom Thame" had been suspended. The case remains pending.

Inspector General Leahy Scott said, "This former employee's egregious acts exploited the vulnerabilities of an individual under her care," said Inspector General Leahy Scott. "I will pursue and hold accountable State workers who so blatantly disregard their professional duties, and I thank District Attorney Thomas Spota and his office for prosecuting this matter."

District Attorney Spota said, "This defendant is charged with exploiting a developmentally disabled individual who she was entrusted to protect, a crime for which she will be held accountable."

At the time Thame allegedly stole the service recipient's identity, she was responsible for seven sites that are operated by OPWDD, five independent residence alternatives (IRA's) and two independent care facilities (ICF's). The facilities housed 57 service recipients altogether. Subsequent to her arrest last summer, Thame retired from State service.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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