



# NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General  
**Catherine Leahy Scott**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 18, 2017  
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## **CENTRAL NEW YORK TRUCK DRIVER CHARGED WITH STEALING MORE THAN \$20,000 IN WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS**

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott announced today the arrest of a Fort Plains resident on charges he defrauded the Workers' Compensation system by more than \$20,000.

Charles Brownell, 46, formerly of Little Falls, was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Insurance Fraud in the Third Degree, both felonies.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Brownell had been collecting Workers' Compensation benefits since sustaining an injury in 2013 as a truck driver for a Palantine Bridge trucking and hauling company. In the years since, he repeatedly reported to medical examiners and the Workers' Compensation insurer that he was not working in any capacity and was unable to drive more than short distances when in fact he was working as a long haul truck driver for a Little Falls business. As a result of Brownell's misrepresentations, he collected more than \$20,000 in Workers' Compensation benefits to which he was not entitled.

"This defendant falsely represented his employment status in order to enrich himself with benefits to which he was not entitled," said Inspector General Scott. "These critical benefits are meant to help honest workers and I will use the resources of my offices to help assure they are not stolen."

Brownell was arraigned in Little Falls Town Court and is due to reappear August 21.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest and Herkimer County District Attorney Jeffrey S. Carpenter and his office for prosecuting this matter.

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

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*The New York State Office of the Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General investigates fraud, abuse and/or illegal acts against the New York State Workers' Compensation system, including fraud by medical service providers, employers seeking to evade appropriate Workers' Compensation charges, and employees who fabricate injuries to fraudulently receive system benefits. Complaints and referrals are kept confidential. We can be reached by calling toll free: 1-800-367-4448, utilizing our online complaint form at <http://www.ig.ny.gov> or sending an email to: [inspector.general@ig.ny.gov](mailto:inspector.general@ig.ny.gov). You also can write to our office at: Office of the Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General, Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor, Albany, New York 12223*