



# NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 14, 2017  
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## **FINGER LAKES WOMAN SENTENCED FOR NEAR \$8,000 WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD**

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the sentencing of a Finger Lakes woman for defrauding the Workers' Compensation system and stealing nearly \$8,000 in insurance benefits to which she was not entitled.

JoAnne Cardona, 48, of Geneseo, was sentenced to a conditional discharge in Albany County Court today for her guilty plea in April to a felony count of the Workers' Compensation crime of Fraudulent Practices. At the time of her plea, Cardona paid full restitution of \$7,880.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Cardona had been receiving Workers' Compensation benefits since 2003 when she allegedly suffered neck, shoulder and upper back injuries when an elderly resident fell on her during her employment at an Amsterdam, New York home for the elderly. Subsequently, she stopped working and began collecting Workers' Compensation benefits.

In October, 2013, she began working at the Center for Disability Rights, Inc. in Rochester, New York. In the subsequent months, as found by the investigation, she repeatedly submitted documentation to the State Insurance Fund asserting she was not working in any capacity. She also falsely testified at a State Workers' Compensation Board hearing in September of 2014 that she had not worked in any capacity before June 2014.

“This defendant brazenly chose to commit fraud to criminally enrich herself with financial benefits to which she was not entitled,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue to dedicate the resources of my office to protect the benefits meant to assist honest, hard-working New Yorkers.”

Under State law, employers are required to maintain Workers' Compensation coverage for their employees, and employees are expected to provide truthful information regarding their work activity to insurance carriers and the Workers' Compensation Board during the time they are receiving benefits.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Insurance Fund for their assistance with the investigation, and Albany County District Attorney P. David Soares and his office for prosecuting this matter.

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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*