



# NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General  
**Catherine Leahy Scott**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 6, 2016  
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## **FORMER STATE EMPLOYEE USED GOVERNMENT CREDIT CARD FOR PERSONAL PURCHASES NEARLY 250 TIMES IN TWO MONTHS**

*State Issued Credit Card Used For Over \$16,500 In Personal Charges Including A Wedding Ceremony, Limousine Services And Family Vacations At An Amusement Park*

ROCHESTER – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest of a former employee of the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (“OPWDD”) on charges that he made over \$16,500 in unapproved personal purchases on a state issued credit card, including limousine services, a wedding ceremony and family vacations at an upstate amusement park.

Donald L. Chrisman, 46, formerly of Niagara Falls and now living on Almay Road in Rochester, was charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony, and Official Misconduct, a misdemeanor.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that between June 1, 2015, and August 18, 2015, Chrisman made at least 249 unapproved personal transactions using his state issued credit card, totaling over \$16,500 in charges. Chrisman charged more than \$4,000 on personal limousine services for himself and his family during that period. He and his family used the limousine services for rides to various locations including Wal-Mart, numerous restaurants, and family vacations at Darien Lake amusement park, improperly using the state-issued credit card for purchases at each location. Chrisman also used the card to pay for a ceremony at The Falls Wedding Chapel in Niagara Falls where he and his wife renewed their vows.

“This defendant’s rampant abuse of a state credit card reflected an astonishingly brazen disregard for the public’s trust,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue to vigorously pursue any state employee who shows such clear disdain for their obligations as a public servant.”

Chrisman was employed by OPWDD as a Peer Advocate from August 7, 2003 until his resignation in February, 2016. As a Peer Advocate, his responsibilities included providing guidance to and advocating for people with developmental disabilities. He was assigned a State credit card to be used for travel expenses as part of his work-related duties.

Chrisman was arraigned in the Town of Brighton Court and released pending his reappearance in court Sept. 19.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest and Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley and her office for prosecuting this matter.

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

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