



# NEWS RELEASE

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

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## **INSPECTOR GENERAL ANNOUNCES ARREST OF HIGH LEVEL NEW YORK STATE CORRECTIONS OFFICIAL ON CHARGES OF FORCIBLY TOUCHING SUBORDINATE EMPLOYEE**

New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott announced the arrest today of James A. Ferro, former Director of Operations for the Special Investigations Unit in the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), on charges he forcibly touched and repeatedly harassed a subordinate employee. Ferro was placed on administrative leave in April, 2014, amid the Inspector General's investigation.

Inspector General Scott said Ferro is being charged with Forcible Touching, a class A misdemeanor, Coercion in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor, Official Misconduct, a class A misdemeanor, and Harassment in the Second Degree, a violation.

"The defendant is charged with serious crimes, committed against his own employees, engaging in assaulting, bullying behavior," said Inspector General Scott. "The defendant's responsibilities were to oversee investigations of misconduct, and yet he allegedly used his power and authority to commit outrageous offenses against his own employees. Until I commenced my investigation, they felt powerless to stop the abuses. No one should have to go to work every day knowing they will be victimized. The alleged behavior by the defendant is deplorable and will not be tolerated. My investigation will continue, holding accountable those who were either aware of and condoned such criminal acts, or were complicit in them."

The Inspector General's investigation revealed that Ferro had been repeatedly harassing a subordinate employee for years. Ferro's alleged misconduct, which included the inappropriate touching of an employee's genitals, arose in DOCCS office facilities.

Ferro appeared today before the Hon. Rachel Kretser of Albany City Court and is scheduled to reappear in court January 26, 2015.

Inspector General Scott said her investigation of DOCCS will continue following Ferro's arrest.

Inspector General Scott thanked DOCCS Acting Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci for the department's continued cooperation in her investigation. She additionally thanked New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman for the prosecution of this case and the New York State Police for the arrest of Ferro.

DOCCS is responsible for more than 54,000 individuals under custody held at 54 state facilities, and 36,500 parolees supervised throughout seven regional offices. The Special Investigations Unit investigates cases of alleged misconduct by DOCCS employees.

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

Click [here](#) for a downloadable audio file of Inspector General Scott's comments on this case.

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