



NEWS RELEASE

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

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CENTRAL NEW YORK PRISON GUARD CHARGED WITH MORE THAN \$38,000 IN SICK LEAVE THEFT AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD FOR FALSIFYING MEDICAL RECORDS AND ASSERTING AN INABILITY TO WORK WHILE APPLYING FOR A NEW JOB IN NORTH CAROLINA

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest of a Five Points Correctional Facility corrections officer on grand larceny and fraud charges for stealing more than \$38,000 in sick leave and workers' compensation benefits he was not entitled to by falsifying medical records and asserting an inability to work while having secretly moved to North Carolina and applied for a job as a guard at a county jail.

Giddel Feliciano, 37, formerly of White Street in Seneca Falls and now living in Greensboro, North Carolina, was charged with two counts of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and five counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, all felonies.

“This corrections officer corruptly took advantage of benefits and protections meant for honest State employees,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “This alleged crime was nothing more than an elaborate scheme to help fund his life in a new state and a search for a new career. I will not tolerate anyone who uses the benefits of public employment to criminally enrich themselves.”

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Feliciano purportedly injured his shoulder while employed with New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision in March 2015 and took worker's compensation leave shortly thereafter. Under an employment contract with the State, corrections officers, who are required by law to be New York State residents, may receive up to six months of workers' compensation wage replacement benefits at full pay if they are unable to work. Following that period, corrections officers may then use accrued sick and personal leave to remain at full salary.

Shortly after taking workers' compensation leave in April 2015, the investigation revealed that Feliciano began submitting falsified medical reports indicating his inability to work based upon medical examinations that never in fact occurred. Through the use of these purported falsified medical records and accrued sick and personal leave time, Feliciano remained out of work at full salary through mid-December 2015. He had, however, moved his residence to North Carolina in August 2015, violating the New York State residency requirement in the process and making him ineligible to collect the nearly \$5,000 in sick and personal leave time benefits he received. During that period, Feliciano utilized a Seneca Falls post office box with a forwarding address to have his mail delivered to North Carolina, where he had applied for a job as a corrections officer in a county jail. The investigation further revealed that from the time Feliciano submitted his first falsified medical records, he received \$33,112 in workers' compensation benefits to which he was not entitled.

Feliciano was arraigned Tuesday night in Romulus Town Court and remanded to the Seneca County Jail in lieu of \$10,000 cash or \$20,000 bond bail pending a town court hearing scheduled for this Friday.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest and Seneca County District Attorney Barry Porsch 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. 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