



NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 19, 2018
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

ERIE COUNTY WOMAN CHARGED WITH OVER \$4,000 WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD

BUFFALO – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest of a Village of Depew woman on charges she defrauded the Workers' Compensation system and stole over \$4,000 in insurance benefits to which he was not entitled.

Carolyn Guarnieri, 44, of Olanta Street, Depew, was arrested and charged today with Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the Second Degree and Petit Larceny.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Guarnieri began receiving workers' compensation benefits in early 1988 when she reportedly injured her back while moving a patient at the Erie County Home and Infirmary. Guarnieri subsequently reported to the insurance carrier paying her benefits that she returned to the workforce as of January 2016 and was receiving \$100 per week in wages. She was in fact being paid \$200 per week in wages. The discrepancy between the wage rate she reported and the actual amount she was paid enabled her to receive additional benefits to which she was not entitled, and which amounted to more than \$4,000 in improper benefits between January 2016 and April 2017.

“This defendant's deception enabled her to improperly supplement her income with benefits to which she was not entitled,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue dedicating 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.

Guarnieri is scheduled to return to the Town of Cheektowaga court on September 11, 2018.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked FCS Administrators, the third-party administrator for the Erie County Home and Infirmary, for their assistance with the investigation, and Erie County District Attorney John J. Flynn 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