



NEWS RELEASE

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

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YONKERS WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO \$6,500 WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD

ALBANY –New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the guilty plea of a Yonkers woman for stealing nearly \$6,500 in Workers' Compensation benefits to which she was not entitled.

Diane Lares, 38, of Woodworth Avenue, Yonkers, pleaded guilty in Yonkers City Court today to petit larceny, a misdemeanor. As part of the plea, Lares is expected to pay back \$6,469 in Workers' Compensation benefits she received but to which she was not entitled.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found Lares sustained an injury in late 2014 after falling down stairs at a clothing retailer where she worked and began receiving Workers' Compensation benefits. She testified at a New York State Workers' Compensation Board hearing in March 2015 that she had not worked since November 2014. The investigation determined, however, that while she was receiving benefits she was regularly working as a bartender at a sports bar.

In addition, on two occasions, Lares filled out medical questionnaires in which she failed to mention her employment as a bartender and asserted that she was not working in any capacity.

During the first half of 2015, Lares collected \$6,469 in Workers' Compensation benefits to which she was not entitled.

Under New York 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.

Workers' Compensation fraud impacts all New Yorkers, from increased insurance premiums to increased workloads for coworkers and an overall reduction in workforce productivity.

Lares is due to return to Yonkers City Court March 30, 2017 for sentencing.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the National Insurance Crime Bureau for their assistance with the investigation, and the offices of the Westchester County District Attorney for prosecuting this case.

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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