



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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STATE WORKER ARRESTED ON CHARGES HE ENDANGERED GROUP HOME RESIDENTS

Allegedly failed to dispense required medication, risking residents' lives

New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott announced the arrest of an Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) employee on charges that he endangered the welfare of group home residents in his care for his failure to dispense medications they required, an omission that could have resulted in serious illness or fatality. The employee was also charged with filing false documentation indicating that he provided the medications when, in fact, he had not.

“Caregivers in our group homes must be sure they are following all policies and procedures necessary to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the people in their care,” said Inspector General Scott. “The defendant in this matter failed to provide medication certain residents required – in some cases for their very survival. Fortunately, no one was harmed and the defendant was removed from his responsibilities before he could place any more residents in danger.”

Warren County District Attorney Kate Hogan said, “Every person who is a resident in a group home has the right to be able to rely on the employees fulfilling their non-delegable duty to properly dispense medications. Because it is such a critical responsibility, when the defendant failed to dispense medications, he was charged criminally. We will prosecute any person who endangers the welfare of our most vulnerable citizens and are grateful that in this instance, no one was physically injured as a result of the defendant’s misconduct.”

Inspector General Scott said Scott Brown, 37, of Hadley, a Direct Support Assistant working in the Fenway Circle Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA) in Lake Luzerne operated by OPWDD, was charged with Falsifying Business Records in the Second Degree, a Class A misdemeanor; and Endangering the Welfare of an Incompetent Person or Physically Disabled Person, a Class A misdemeanor; and Official Misconduct.

At the time of the incident, Brown oversaw five residents in the IRA. Among the medications Brown allegedly failed to provide were anti-seizure medications, breathing treatments, anti-spasticity medications, and vitamins.

Brown made admissions to the Inspector General regarding his illegal conduct.

Brown was arraigned before the Hon. Rodney Johnson of Lake Luzerne Town Court. He is scheduled to return to court November 19. Inspector General Scott thanked Warren County Sheriff Nathan H. York and his department for assisting in the investigation and the arrest, and Warren County District Attorney Kathleen B. Hogan for prosecuting this matter. The defendant is deemed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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