



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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INSPECTOR GENERAL ANNOUNCES ARRAIGNMENT OF STATE EMPLOYEE ON CHARGES SHE STOLE FROM STATE GROUP HOME RESIDENTS IN SARATOGA COUNTY

New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott announced a New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) employee has been arraigned on charges she stole money from residents for whom she was responsible for providing care.

Danika Dates, 38, of Malta who is a Developmental Assistant 1 with OPWDD was arraigned on four counts of Grand Larceny in the 4th degree for possession of the residents' debit cards outside of work hours, allegedly stealing \$120 with the cards. In addition to caring for residents with disabilities, Dates served as a supervisor of staff at the facility where she worked.

"The Defendant was responsible for attending to people unable to care for themselves, and she allegedly abused her position by accessing their accounts and taking money without their knowledge or consent," said Inspector General Scott. "Fortunately, she is now being held accountable for the crimes she is alleged to have committed. While no theft is justified, preying on those you are charged with caring for and protecting is particularly egregious."

Dates allegedly committed the thefts at an OPWDD Individualized Residential Alternative (IRA) located in Clifton Park by using the residents' credit cards and purchasing personal items for herself. The alleged unauthorized use of the cards and theft occurred in December 2014. OPWDD alerted the Inspector General of the alleged theft and placed Dates on administrative leave December 30, pending the outcome of the investigation.

Inspector General Scott thanked OPWDD for the agency's diligence, the Saratoga County Sheriff's Department for the arrest, and Saratoga County District Attorney Karen A. Heggen for the prosecution of this case.

She was arraigned before the Hon. James F. Hughes of the Town of Clifton Park Justice Court, and is due to return to court March 11.

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

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