



NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 14, 2016
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

FORMER ALEXANDRIA BAY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER INDICTED ON CHARGE OF STEALING NEARLY \$5,000 IN VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' BENEFITS

WATERTOWN – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the indictment and arrest of a former Alexandria Bay volunteer firefighter on a charge of stealing nearly \$5,000 in volunteer firefighters' benefits.

Mathew G. Taylor, 34, of Alexandria Bay, was indicted by a Jefferson County Grand Jury on a charge of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony, for allegedly stealing \$4,800 in benefits for more than two months after being medically cleared to return to work and no longer entitled to the benefits.

“This former firefighter defrauded a benefits system meant to protect volunteers who selflessly serve their community and are subsequently injured in the line of duty” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will continue to dedicate the resources of my office to investigate and apprehend anyone who steals from this critically important safety net.”

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Taylor was injured in January 2013 during a training accident with the Alexandria Bay Volunteer Fire Department. Due to his injury, he was declared unable to work. That June, however, Taylor's physician cleared him to return to work, changing his status and eligibility for volunteer firefighters' benefits. Instead of returning to work, Taylor continued to cash volunteer firefighters' benefit checks, which he was no longer entitled to, at the rate of \$400 per week.

Under State law, volunteer fire companies are required to maintain volunteer firefighters' benefits coverage for their volunteers. This coverage is administered by the New York State Worker's Compensation Board. Volunteer firefighters who are receiving benefits 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.

Taylor was arraigned in Jefferson County Court and released on \$2,000 cash bail pending his return to court Aug. 25.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest and thanked Jefferson County District Attorney Kristyna S. Mills and her office for prosecuting this matter.

###

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