



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the New York State Welfare Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott – Acting Welfare Inspector General

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STATEN ISLAND BUSINESS OWNER CHARGED WITH MORE THAN \$100,000 WELFARE FRAUD

NEW YORK CITY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and Richmond County District Attorney Michael E. McMahon today announced the arrest of a Staten Island man on charges that he and another individual stole more than \$100,000 in Medicaid and food stamp benefits by hiding hundreds of thousands of dollars in income and assets that made them ineligible for welfare benefits.

Igor Urovish, 56, of Thollen Street, Staten Island, was charged today with Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, Welfare Fraud in the Third Degree, Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree and Falsifying Business Records in the Second Degree, all felonies.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that from 2009 through early 2014, Urovish and another individual (known to investigators but who has not been charged) stole more than \$100,000 in Medicaid and food stamp benefits through an elaborate fraud that included the concealment or underreporting of income from various corporations Urovish owned, trust funds he managed and child support payments that would all have made them ineligible for the more than \$100,000 in welfare assistance Urovish and the other individual received.

During the full years in question, the investigation found that Urovish's bank records, and other evidence, showed a minimum annual household income of between \$67,000 and \$93,000. The investigation determined that at various points during the fraud, the Urovish family held ownership interests in corporations from which they derived income, including First Advanced Care, Inc. and IVU Management, ambulance companies that transported patients receiving Medicaid. These assets and income were either not reported or underreported to the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) in welfare benefits applications for Urovish and his family during the years in question. Additionally, Urovish and his family received other income, which at times was not reported to HRA, from two trusts and from relatives. During those years, Urovish and his family reported to HRA monthly income anywhere from between no income to a few hundred dollars for some months and a maximum of about \$1,500 on a few occasions.

“Through a brazen years-long fraud, this defendant used his experience in dealing with welfare service agencies to enhance his comfortable lifestyle with the theft of more than \$100,000 in benefits meant for those among us who are the most in need,” said **Inspector General Leahy Scott**. “Now, instead of living comfortable by stealing from taxpayers, this defendant will have to account for his actions in court. I will continue to use the resources of my office to put a stop to anyone defrauding the welfare system.”

“This defendant has been accused of stealing more than \$100,000 from public assistance programs set up to provide benefits to the disadvantaged,” said **District Attorney McMahon**. “My office will continue to vigorously prosecute crimes that cheat taxpayers out of much needed public funds, especially when our City's

most needy are the ones being harmed. I would like to commend Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott for her thorough investigation and also thank ADA Jeffrey Curiale for his hard work on this case.”

Urovish was arraigned in Richmond County Criminal Court and released pending a reappearance July 17 for further court action.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked HRA for their assistance with the investigation and Richmond County District Attorney Michael E. McMahon and his office for their assistance with the investigation and for prosecuting the case.

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 Welfare Inspector General investigates fraud, abuse or illegal acts committed against public assistance programs designed to help those in need. Our office also investigates complaints about the agencies and local social services districts who administer social services programs. Complaints and referrals are kept confidential. We can be reached by calling toll free: 1-800-367-4448, utilizing our online complaint form: <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 Welfare Inspector General, Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor Albany, New York 12223