



NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Aug. 4, 2016
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LIVINGSTON COUNTY WOMAN FEIGNED USE OF CANE FOR WALKING TO FRAUDULENTLY OBTAIN MORE THAN \$27,000 IN WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest and arraignment of a Livingston County Women on charges she falsified injuries and feigned the use of a cane to fraudulently obtain more than \$27,000 in workers' compensation benefits to which she was not entitled.

Christine Weipert, 51, of Genesee Street, Mount Morris, was arraigned Wednesday evening in Mount Morris Village Court on the charges of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, Insurance Fraud in the Third Degree, Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and the Workers' Compensation Charge of Fraudulent Practices, all felonies.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found Weipert reported she was injured in August 2013 while unpacking a printer at the Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES where she worked as a computer service assistant. Since then, Weipert has been receiving weekly workers' compensation benefits while repeatedly asserting to medical examiners that she was unable to work, sit or stand for prolonged periods, and that she needs a cane to walk. The investigation, which included a review of her social media activity, found she used a cane only when attending medical exams or a hearing before the State Worker's Compensation Board, and that at other times she engaged in normal activities without any apparent impairment.

Weipert was separately observed by law enforcement officers in her home town walking without any limp or cane, and in the fall of 2015 filed documents with her employer's workers compensation administrator attesting that she was unable to work and had difficulty driving and walking because of her injury. Weipert has been receiving workers' compensation benefits in the amount of \$585 per week and since being observed without any impairment, received more than \$27,000 in benefits to which she was not entitled.

"This defendant falsified records and feigned serious injury in order to receive benefits to which she was not entitled," said Inspector General Leahy Scott. "I will continue dedicating the resources of my office to pursue anyone who tries to defraud the workers' compensation system and to protect the benefits meant to assist honest, hard-working New Yorkers."

Under 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.

Weipert was arraigned in Village of Mount Morris Court Wednesday evening and entered a not guilty plea. She was released pending a return date for court of Tuesday, Aug. 9.

The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest, the Village of Mount Morris Police Department for their assistance with the investigation, and Livingston County District Attorney Gregory J. McCaffrey and his office for prosecuting this matter.

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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