



NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 2, 2019
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STATE CORRECTIONS OFFICER INDICTED ON CHARGES THAT HE STOLE WORKERS' COMPENSATION BENEFITS BY SUBMITTING FRAUDULENT LEAVE DOCUMENTATION

BUFFALO – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the indictment and arrest of a New York State corrections officer on charges that he defrauded the Workers' Compensation system and, through the submission of improperly altered leave documents, stole over \$4,000 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

Brendon Clontz, 31, of Buffalo, NY, a corrections officer with the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, was indicted by a Wyoming County Grand Jury on the charges of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and five counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, all felonies.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Clontz began receiving Workers' Compensation benefits in January 2018 for a December 2017 injury that occurred while working at Wyoming Correctional Facility. Clontz subsequently allegedly submitted two altered "Documentation for Workers' Compensation Leave" forms as well as a "Work Release Form", all purportedly completed and signed by his treating medical providers and intended to justify Clontz' absences from work. The investigation revealed that the documents had been altered from those originally provided to Clontz by the medical providers. As a result of his alleged intentional submission of altered documents, Clontz obtained \$4,268.69 in Workers' Compensation indemnity benefits between January 2018 and June 2018 to which he was not entitled.

"The charges allege repeat intentional deceptions enabling this prison officer to steal benefits to which he was not entitled," said Inspector General Leahy Scott. "The Workers' Compensation system is meant to benefit hard-working New Yorkers who are actually in need of leave, not those who are simply looking for easy access to unearned paid time off. I will continue to use all resources available to pursue any employee who violates the public trust."

Clontz was arraigned on the indictment today in Wyoming County Court and released on his own recognizance pending his reappearance in court on January 10, 2019.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Insurance Fund and the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision for their assistance with the investigation, the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest, and Wyoming County District Attorney Donald G. O'Geen and his office for prosecuting this matter.

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 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