



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Letizia Tagliafierro

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 17, 2019
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

CENTRAL NEW YORK PSYCHIATRIC CENTER EMPLOYEE CHARGED WITH SUBMITTING FRAUDULENT MEDICAL FORMS FOR UNEARNED TIME OFF

SYRACUSE – New York State Inspector General Letizia Tagliafierro today announced the arrest of a Central New York Psychiatric Center employee on multiple felony charges accusing him of submitting forged doctor notes to enable him to receive unearned time off with fraudulent medical excuses.

Shelby Ferguson, 54, of Rome, a Secure Care Treatment Aide II for the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH), was charged today with three counts each of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, all felonies.

An investigation by the Offices of the Inspector General found that on three occasions from April through September 2016, Ferguson submitted fraudulent certification forms for leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), containing forged physician signatures, to justify time off he was otherwise not entitled to. During the investigation, while speaking to an investigator, Ferguson stated regarding the filings, “I turned it in. I’m the only one that can turn it in.”

“The defendant chose to deceive his employer and the State into granting him time off that he did not deserve,” said **Inspector General Tagliafierro**. “He violated the public’s trust and the Offices of the Inspector General as well as our law enforcement partners will pursue anyone who corrupts a critical program meant to assist honest employees.”

The Family Medical Leave Act enables covered employees to take extended time off from work to handle family and medical matters while maintaining employment security.

Ferguson was arraigned on the charges in the Marcy Town Court and released on his own recognizance pending his reappearance in court on May 9, 2019.

Inspector General Tagliafierro thanked OMH for their assistance with the investigation, the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest and Oneida County District Attorney Scott D. McNamara and his office for prosecuting the case.

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

###