



NEWS RELEASE

**From New York State Inspector General
Letizia Tagliafierro**

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Contact: Lee Park - 518.474.1010

**BUFFALO HOSPITAL WORKER SENTENCED FOR FEIGNING
POVERTY IN FOOD STAMP FRAUD SCHEME**

BUFFALO – New York State Inspector General Letizia Tagliafierro today announced the sentencing of a Buffalo resident on charges she defrauded New York’s food stamp program for more than \$6,000 by dramatically underreporting her income with bogus pay stubs.

Marie Jackson, 39, of Kermit Avenue, Buffalo, pleaded guilty on July 11, 2019 to Welfare Fraud in the Fifth Degree, a misdemeanor, and was sentenced today in Buffalo City Court to a one-year conditional discharge. Jackson agreed to pay full restitution.

“This individual understated her true earnings so she could benefit at the taxpayers’ expense,” said Inspector General Tagliafierro. “As she has learned: there is no benefit in cheating the welfare system. Those who try will be caught and face justice.”

An investigation by the Office of the New York State Welfare Inspector General and the Erie County Department of Social Services found that Jackson, a medical assistant for an Erie County hospital network, repeatedly submitted forged payroll records in late 2014 through 2015 when certifying her need for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps) funding. Her submitted records indicated an annualized income of less than \$10,000 in 2014 and 2015, enabling her to fraudulently receive \$6,246 in food stamps, when she was actually making more than \$30,000 in salary and was therefore ineligible for the public benefits.

Inspector General Tagliafierro thanked the Erie County Department of Social Services for its partnership with the investigation and Erie County District Attorney John J. Flynn and his office for their assistance with the investigation and for prosecuting this matter.

The Office of the New York State Welfare Inspector General investigates fraud, abuse or illegal acts committed against public assistance programs designed to help those in need. The Office also investigates complaints about the agencies and local social services districts that administer social services programs. The Office may be reached by calling 1-800-367-4448, visiting our online complaint portal at www.ig.ny.gov or emailing inspector.general@ig.ny.gov. Complaints may also be submitted via mail: Office of the Welfare Inspector General, Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor Albany, New York 12223.

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