



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 29, 2019  
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**WEST SENECA WOMAN SENTENCED FOR STEALING \$32,000 IN  
WELFARE BENEFITS**

New York State Inspector General Letizia Tagliafierro and Erie County District Attorney John J. Flynn today announced the sentencing of an Erie County resident who stole more than \$32,000 in public benefits to which she was not entitled by concealing household income in her welfare application.

Stephanie Jurek, 34, of West Seneca, [pleaded guilty to Welfare Fraud in the Fourth Degree, a felony, in August](#) and was sentenced today to three years' probation and must pay restitution of \$32,653.72.

Jurek concealed the fact she lived with the employed father of their two children and through such misrepresentation was able to receive a total of \$32,653.72 in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid benefits from July 2013 through October 2017 to which she was not entitled.

"This individual concealed the fact that there was steady money coming into her household for years, thereby ripping off taxpayers for tens of thousands of dollars," said Inspector General Tagliafierro. "The welfare system exists to provide crucial support to those in need – and we will not tolerate abuses of this important program."

Jurek, along with four other individuals, was initially arrested in February as part of a welfare fraud law enforcement sweep. Inspector General Tagliafierro thanked the New York State Police for its assistance with the arrests, the Erie County Department of Social Services for its assistance with the investigation, and District Attorney Flynn and his office for assistance with the investigation and for prosecuting these cases.

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