



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 8, 2019  
Contact: [Lee Park](#) - 518.474.1010

**TROY ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTER'S FORMER PROGRAM  
DIRECTOR SENTENCED FOR STEALING FOOD STAMPS FROM  
RESIDENTS FOR PERSONAL GROCERY PURCHASES TOTALING  
\$9,200**

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Letizia Tagliafierro and Rensselaer County District Attorney Mary Pat Donnelly today announced the sentencing of a Troy residential substance abuse facility's former program director who stole food stamp funds from 46 residents under his care and used the funds to purchase groceries for himself totaling almost \$9,200 over an almost 21-month period.

Elwood Powell, 55, of Watervliet, a former program director for the substance abuse treatment residential program 820 River Street, Inc., was sentenced today before the Hon. Jennifer Sober in Rensselaer County Court to five years' probation and ordered to immediately pay \$9,194.29 in restitution based upon his previously entered [guilty plea](#) to Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony.

The Inspector General's investigation found that between March 2017 and the end of 2018, Powell stole Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards belonging to 46 residents of the program to buy groceries for himself. The SNAP program is regulated in New York State by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). The residents' EBT card funds were meant to be used to subsidize their meal costs. Instead of transferring funds from the EBT cards to the facility's account, Powell used the cards to purchase himself groceries in 146 separate store transactions.

Inspector General Tagliafierro said, "Mr. Powell used public funds designed to help our most vulnerable residents as his personal bank account. This case exemplifies why we must remain vigilant to ensure those we entrust with managing welfare funds are operating in an honest and transparent manner."

District Attorney Mary Pat Donnelly said, "Elwood Powell used his position of authority to victimize those placed in his care. His conduct jeopardized the basic welfare of a vulnerable population. This sentence ensures that he will be held accountable for his actions."

Inspector General Tagliafierro thanked the New York State Police for its assistance with the arrest, OTDA for its assistance with the investigation, and Rensselaer County District Attorney Mary Pat Donnelly and her office for prosecuting this case.

###