



Offices of the
Inspector General

LUCY LANG
Inspector General

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January 23, 2024

Molly Wasow Park
Commissioner
New York City Department of Social Services
Human Resources Administration
4 World Trade Center
150 Greenwich Street, 38th Floor
New York, New York 10007

Re: OWIG 1246-318-2022

Dear Commissioner Wasow Park:

On May 10, 2022, the Offices of the New York State Welfare Inspector General (OWIG) received an anonymous complaint alleging that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is collecting food stamps and other welfare benefits for her children but does not have custody of those children.

OWIG's investigation of this allegation determined that [REDACTED] who resides at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in the Bronx, is collecting public assistance benefits for herself and three of her children; [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has received such public assistance benefits [REDACTED] since at least 2008. [REDACTED] has two other children, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for whom she does not receive public assistance benefits.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] children's uncle, advised OWIG that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] have resided with [REDACTED] and his wife on and off since 2008, when they were infants. At times, the children have gone back and forth and lived with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was unable to recall the periods in which the children lived with him or [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. According to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the grandmother of the [REDACTED] children, her custody of the children first began around 2006, and she has resided in Pennsylvania with the three [REDACTED] children since 2017. [REDACTED] stated that she is currently pursuing legal custody over [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who has been living with her since the child, who is presently seven years of age, was three months old.

The New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) Bureau of Fraud Investigations (BFI) advised OWIG that it opened cases on [REDACTED] in July 2015 and on at least one other occasion based on similar allegations, but subsequently closed these investigations without findings against [REDACTED]. BFI did not provide a reason for closing the cases.

Given the above statement from [REDACTED] which supports that [REDACTED] was presumably eligible to collect benefits for some of her children during some periods, and the fact that BFI

investigated similar allegations against [REDACTED] and found the allegations lacking, this case does not meet the bar for criminal prosecution. Therefore, I am referring the findings of this investigation to HRA for any action deemed appropriate.

Please advise me of any action taken by HRA in response to this referral within 45 days of the date of this letter. If you require further information, please contact Downstate Chief of Investigations Benjamin Defibaugh at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucy Lang".

Lucy Lang
Inspector General

cc: Ann Marie Scalia, Esq.
General Counsel and Chief Legal Officer

Laura Parker
Assistant Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Fraud Investigation