NEW YORK STATE | Offices of the Inspector General

LUCY LANG
Inspector General

Empire State Plaza • Agency Building 2, 16th Floor • Albany, New York 12223 • (518) 474-1010 • ig.ny.gov

August 26, 2025

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 0120-322-2025

Dear Commissioner Park:

On January 7, 2025, the Office of the New York State Welfare Inspector General (OWIG) received a complaint alleging that [redacted], a recipient of public assistance benefits who is living in Staten Island, may be committing welfare fraud by underreporting to the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) income she receives from her employment at her aunt's daycare center. Additionally, the complaint alleges that [redacted] may not be disclosing to HRA employment income earned by her daughter, [redacted], and her son, [redacted]. The following is a summary of the findings of OWIG's investigation of this complaint.

Welfare Management System (WMS) records show that [redacted] has an active case and is receiving cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and Medicaid, for herself and three of her children, [redacted] and [redacted] is not an active line on the case. The WMS budget screen shows that her case is currently being budgeted to include $866.67 in earned income and $980 in unearned income.

With respect to the allegation that [redacted] may be underreporting income she receives from her employment, a search of the HRA Viewer shows that [redacted] submitted to HRA two employment verification letters. The first letter, dated August 23, 2022 or 2023 (the year is partially obscured in the HRA Viewer), is from [redacted], the owner of [redacted] Daycare located at [redacted] in Staten Island. According to the letter, [redacted] works "20-30 hours or as when I need her," "3 to 4 days a week" and gets paid "[$]400.00 bi-weekly or [on] the 26th of each month depending on the children's attendance." The second letter, dated August 9, 2024, which is also from [redacted] is largely the same but for the hours worked ("20-32 hours") and the number of days worked each week ("3 to 5 days").

Regarding the allegation that [redacted] may not be disclosing to HRA employment income earned by her daughter, [redacted] and her son, [redacted] per Accurint records, [redacted] and [redacted] currently reside with [redacted] at [redacted] Street, Staten Island, New York [redacted]. A search on the Work Number database shows that [redacted]

started working for Amazon on June 17, 2023. Her annual gross income was $9,507.50 in 2023; $12,116.56 in 2024; and she has earned $2,237.69 in gross income as of February 10, 2025. Her home address is listed as [redacted] Street, Staten Island, New York [redacted], which is the address on the public assistance case. The Work Number database shows that [redacted] is also employed at Amazon, as of September 9, 2021, and he is also using [redacted] Street, Staten Island, New York [redacted] as his home address. His annual gross income was $41,607.31 in 2023; $46,023.16 in 2024; and he has earned $4,599.50 in gross income as of February 10, 2025.

A search of the HRA Viewer shows that in her public benefits application dated July 26, 2023, [redacted] included [redacted] as part of the household but did not include her income from Amazon. This application, and all future applications, do not include [redacted] as part of the household. The HRA Viewer also shows a letter dated August 3, 2024, from [redacted] stating that [redacted] is no longer in the household and [redacted] does not know where she is. Lastly, the HRA Viewer includes a letter dated August 14, 2024, from [redacted] stating that he is not in the [redacted] Street household but that he "tr[ies] to give [redacted] $300 a month."

Based on the discrepancies between the information disclosed by [redacted] to HRA and the information in the Work Number database, and that [redacted] claims not to know [redacted] whereabouts even though, according to the Work Numbers database [redacted] is using [redacted] address, I am referring this matter to your office for further review and any administrative action deemed necessary.

Please advise this office 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 Andrew Weiss, Attorney-in-Charge for Welfare Fraud at [redacted] or [redacted]

Sincerely,

Lucy Lang

Lucy Lang
Inspector General

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