

# **Saving Tax Payer Dollar\$**

## **“Crime Doesn’t Pay”**

**As we all know times are extremely hard. There are millions without jobs and it’s very important that benefits are available for those who are in need. But, there are those who will continue to attempt to take advantage of the system no matter what. The Program Fraud Unit of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducts investigations to help reduce and deter such actions. In this space we will share a story illustrative of the fact that crime does not pay.**

**A client was accused of committing fraud. Upon investigation, fraud was substantiated, the client admitted fault, and there was an order of restitution entering judgment in favor of the Department in the sum of \$27,817.63. The client was placed on probation for a payment plan.**

**Six years later this same client was again accused of committing fraud through the DHR Hotline. The complainant was the alleged absent father of one of the client’s children. He alleged that the client was living with the father of two of her other children and was fraudulently collecting benefits for the complainant’s son, even though he had legal custody of him at the time.**

**The complainant further revealed that the father of the client’s last two children was the day care provider for the client’s youngest four children and that he lived in the home with the client. The complainant had tried to apply for benefits for his son and himself and was told by the local office that the client was already receiving benefits for their son at her home.**

**A review of the records revealed that the client was in fact receiving food stamp benefits and medical assistance benefits. The client had also applied for purchase of care benefits for five children, claiming that she lived alone with her eight children.**

**After an extensive investigation by the OIG, fraud was substantiated. The investigation revealed that the client had fraudulently collected food stamp benefits for the complainant’s child for a total of approximately four years. The client had also collected medical assistance benefits for the complainant’s child during a time period when she did not have legal custody of the child, according to custody papers. It was further confirmed that the client was also married to one of the alleged absent parents.**

**Based on OIG’s fraud finding the client was charged with welfare fraud, theft and falsifying an application for public assistance. Her subsequent**

**prosecution resulted in an overpayment in the amount of \$3,865.00, and incarceration for welfare fraud.**

**The Department of Social Services program provides an important safety net, especially in these times of financial hardship for so many people. But those who deliberately defraud the system will come to realize that crime truly does not pay.**