

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



June 26, 2009

The Honorable Adrian M. Fenty
Mayor
District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mayor's Correspondence Unit, Suite 316
Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY REPORT

Dear Mayor Fenty:

This report is to inform you of the recent sentencing of Dionne Witherspoon, a former Department of Human Services (DHS), Income Maintenance Administration (IMA) employee, who participated in a welfare fraud scheme by conspiring with her mother Valerie Price, also a former DHS, IMA employee, to qualify for low-income housing using fraudulent IMA documents.

The investigation, which was conducted by Special Agent Bernadette Todd-Atwater, D.C. Office of the Inspector General (OIG), revealed that on April 4, 2007, and April 4, 2008, Ms. Witherspoon and Ms. Price created and submitted fraudulent DHS IMA income verification documents in support of Ms. Witherspoon's U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Section 8 Housing Application, for an apartment in Washington, D.C. Although Ms. Witherspoon had not received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits since 2001, the income verification documents claim Ms. Witherspoon received \$239.00 per month in TANF benefits in 2007 and 2008. Ms. Witherspoon's fraudulent TANF representation helped her qualify for low-income housing by establishing that she already was receiving public assistance.

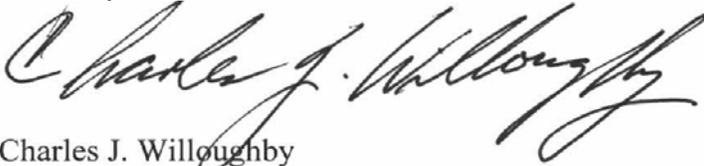
Ms. Witherspoon, who had worked for DHS since 2001, was terminated from DHS in December 2006. Ms. Price, who had worked for DHS since July 2007, was terminated in August 2008.

On June 10, 2009, Ms. Witherspoon pled guilty to one count of Fraud in Obtaining Public Assistance and one count of Conspiracy to Commit Fraud, and was sentenced to two years' incarceration (suspended) and two years' unsupervised probation.

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If you need any additional information, please call me or Stacie Pittell, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations, at (202) 727-2540. When calling, please reference OIG Control Number 2008-0538.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles J. Willoughby". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Charles J. Willoughby
Inspector General

CJW/bta