



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE STATE INSPECTOR GENERAL
Final Report
September 12, 2008

FINAL REPORT ON HOUSING WORKER INDICTED
IN RENT ROLL BRIBES

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

An investigation by the New York State Inspector General's office (NYSIG) conducted jointly with the New York State Attorney General's office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), determined that Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) employee Keith James improperly accessed DHCR rent roll records and then sold the information he obtained. James was indicted and arrested as a result of selling confidential DHCR information.

ALLEGATIONS

The FBI notified the Inspector General that James, a Rent Program Specialist working in the Rent Administration Unit in Brooklyn, New York, accessed and sold confidential rent roll information in exchange for money.

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION

James works for DHCR at its Hanson Place office in Brooklyn, New York. As a Rent Program Specialist, James had access to confidential rent roll information for buildings under DHCR control. Every building that is rent-controlled or rent-stabilized submits information to DHCR concerning the number of tenants in a building, the monthly rents that are being paid by each tenant, the number of units that are rent-stabilized or rent-controlled and other information concerning the property. James was permitted to access this information as part of his job. However, this information was considered confidential by DHCR and is made available only to the landlord of the building.

In July through September 2005, James was approached by a person who was interested in purchasing buildings. James was given the addresses of three buildings. James then accessed the rent roll information for those three buildings on his DHCR computer, printed it out, and sold it in exchange for money.

The matter was referred to the New York State Office of the Attorney General for prosecution. James was arrested on August 12, 2008 and charged in Brooklyn Supreme

Court with the following crimes: bribe receiving in the third degree, receiving reward for official misconduct in the second degree, and computer trespass.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Inspector General found that that Keith James illegally accessed and sold confidential DHCR rent roll information in exchange for money. The Inspector General referred this matter to the New York State Attorney General's office for prosecution. The Attorney General investigated the matter and indicted and arrested James on the aforementioned charges. James was terminated by DHCR on August 26, 2008.