



News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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DES Office of Inspector General Arrests DES Employee for Benefits Fraud

PHOENIX – DES Director Timothy Jeffries today announced the Office of Inspector General arrested a DES employee on the suspicion she provided falsified information to DES in order for her household to obtain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

“It’s extremely disappointing, and dare I say maddening, to discover fraud is being committed within the agency that has been entrusted to provide critical services to those in need,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “Maintaining the integrity of taxpayer funds is a critical component of any government entity and it simply won’t be tolerated in *Our NEW DES*. Fraud on any level is illegal, but for this offense to have allegedly been committed by a DES employee, is reprehensible.”

“While it is disheartening to learn that a DES employee may have committed criminal acts for improper personal gain, I am proud of the fine work of our OIG investigations team in taking swift and decisive action to eliminate continued wrong doing,” said Inspector General Juan J. Arcellana. “The arrest was secured after hours of thorough investigative effort. As evidenced by this outcome, the Office of Inspector General will continue its relentless efforts to maintain the integrity of DES programs and to protect the citizens of Arizona against criminal acts.”

The employee, a Program Service Evaluator within the DES Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility, is alleged to have conspired with other household members to provide falsified information to DES in order for the household to obtain SNAP benefits. Additionally, it is suspected the employee used her position with the State to access the client case files of other household members without authorization.

“We will continue to hold people accountable in an effort to honor this noble work,” said Michael Wisehart, Assistant Director of the Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility. “We remain focused on ensuring that those who commit fraud will be found and held responsible for their actions.”

DES OIG obtained sufficient circumstantial evidence that culminated in the probable cause arrest of the employee. She was arrested by OIG detectives at a DES office, and transported to the Department of Public Safety for fingerprinting and criminal history verification. The investigation into this matter is ongoing.

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