



News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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DES Office of the 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 he provided falsified information to DES in order for his household to obtain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

“Stealing is against the law,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “Stealing from the poor is as egregious as it gets. Anyone, whether internally or externally, who cheats or steals or misuses the sacred funds we’re entrusted to deploy for the poor, is subject to the consequences that follow. That includes food stamp fraud, unemployment insurance fraud or internal fraud and misuse.”

“The Office of Inspector General will continue its efforts in protecting DES programs from fraud,” said Inspector General Juan J. Arcellana. “These efforts include the safeguarding of DES programs and services from those entrusted as DES employees.”

Mr. Ernesto Gonzalez, Production Control Specialist for the Division of Employment and Rehabilitative Services (DERS), Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB), is alleged to have signed falsified expenditures, submitted on behalf of the household, in order to obtain SNAP benefits.

DES-OIG obtained sufficient circumstantial evidence that culminated in the probable cause arrest of Mr. Gonzalez. He was arrested by OIG detectives in the local DES office in which he works, and transported to the Department of Public Safety for fingerprinting and photo verification.

The investigation into this matter is ongoing.

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