



News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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Mayor of Guadalupe Sentenced for Food Stamp Fraud *Rebecca Jimenez ordered to pay restitution*

PHOENIX – DES Director Timothy Jeffries today announced its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted a successful investigation into food stamp fraud by Mayor Rebecca Jimenez of the Town of Guadalupe, Arizona. The extensive investigation led to an indictment by a State Grand Jury on October 21, 2014, and a subsequent jury trial in July 2015. Ms. Jimenez was sentenced today in Maricopa County Superior Court.

“Those who seek to defraud Arizona and her people by illegally obtaining benefits will be found and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “There is no legal and ethical justification for someone to steal from our human services system. Lies, deceit, and stealing from those often in dire need of assistance are utterly reprehensible, and will not be tolerated.”

“The DES Office of the Inspector General continually monitors the usage of taxpayer dollars and will bring to justice anyone seeking to misuse public benefits,” said Inspector General Juan J. Arcellana. “Fraud on any level is unacceptable. As stewards of taxpayer funds, our responsibility is to see they are used appropriately and responsibly.”

Ms. Jimenez was offered and accepted a plea of Criminal Possession of a Forgery Device in violation of A.R.S. § 13-2003. –a Class 1 Misdemeanor. The plea requires her to pay \$5,435, in restitution to DES, as well as up to \$5,000 in investigative costs. Ms. Jimenez will also serve a period of unsupervised probation.

Between July 27, 2011, and February 28, 2013, Rebecca Jimenez received SNAP benefits. She submitted false documents and failed to report to the Family Assistance Administration (FAA) that she was living with the father of her children, Marcus Gonzales. The evidence showed that Mr. Gonzales was employed and was earning a significant salary during this time.

Had Ms. Jimenez properly reported Marcus Gonzales’ income, she would not have been eligible to receive SNAP benefits. Ms. Jimenez made various false statements regarding Mr. Gonzales’ household situation on the DES FAA assistance applications received on July 27, 2011, February 16, 2012, March 15, 2012, and August 23, 2012. On January 29, 2013, Ms. Jimenez completed “online” applications for the SNAP benefits.

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