



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 its Office of the Inspector General arrested a DES employee on the suspicion she unlawfully used an Electronic Benefits Transaction (EBT) card to obtain Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

“Serving Arizonans in need is a noble privilege,” said Director Timothy Jeffries. “The financial resources we bring to bear on their behalf must be shepherded with care and protected with vigor. Fraud on any level is abhorrent. Having it occur in a DES office by an employee is vile and reprehensible. DES will bring down the hammer of justice on anyone who steals human service dollars from children and their families in dire need.”

“The mission of the Office of Inspector General is to maintain the integrity of DES programs and services,” said Inspector General Juan J. Arcellana. “Therefore, the Department will invoke its full force of authority to prevent and detect fraud, waste and abuse. The physical arrest of an employee suspected of criminal activity involving DES programs is a clear indication of this commitment.”

Ms. Angela Engram, Program Service Evaluator (PSE) for the Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (DBME) Family Assistance Administration (FAA), is alleged to have used an EBT card issued to a client who is incarcerated, and therefore, no longer eligible to receive SNAP benefits. Additionally, it is believed that Ms. Engram was involved in submitting a SNAP benefit renewal application for the EBT card in order to obtain additional SNAP benefits.

Probable cause for the arrest was established after obtaining video surveillance in which it is believed that Ms. Engram is seen using the EBT card on multiple occasions. Ms. Engram was interviewed by a detective this morning with the DES-OIG, during which time incriminating statements were made. After completion of the interview, she was physically arrested by OIG detectives in the local DES office in which she works, and transported to the Buckeye Police Department for fingerprinting and photo verification.

The Office of the Inspector General appreciates the support provided by the Buckeye Police Department. The investigation into this matter is ongoing.

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