



NEWS RELEASE

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CITY EMPLOYEE CHARGED WITH INSURANCE FRAUD

PATERSON, NEW JERSEY:

May 4, 2017

Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia M. Valdes announces the arrest of Francis Branis, age 48 of Paterson, New Jersey.

Mr. Branis was arrested May 3, 2017 by members of the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office Insurance Fraud Unit. Mr. Branis was charged with Insurance Fraud in the second degree. (NJSA 2C: 21-4.1 (a)). Mr. Branis' first appearance is scheduled in front of the Honorable John F. Meola, P.C.M.C., at 1:30 p.m. today. The Passaic County Prosecutor's Office is moving for detention on the defendant.

The charge arises out of Mr. Branis' employment at the City of Paterson Department of Public Works. Mr. Branis was allegedly injured on the job and unable to work. As a result, Mr. Branis made a claim for Worker's Compensation. The State contends that the claim contains false and misleading statements. While collecting Worker's Compensation benefits, Mr. Branis was observed driving a truck and working a route for a soda and beer distributor. The City of Paterson referred the matter to the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office.

A second degree offense is punishable by between 5 and 10 years in New Jersey State Prison.

A criminal complaint is merely an accusation. Despite this accusation, the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation is continuing. Passaic County Chief Assistant Prosecutor Jay W. McCann is prosecuting the case against the defendant. Any inquiries may be directed to Passaic County Chief Assistant Prosecutor Jay W. McCann at (973) 837-7616 or jmccann@passaiccountynj.org.



(Photo: Francis Branis)