



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI ARRESTS PRESIDENT OF QUEENS EXPEDITING COMPANY ON CHARGES OF
FALSIFYING A CITY BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT DOCUMENT**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrest of the president of an expediting business on charges of faxing a phony document to her client, an architect, to make it appear that the City Department of Buildings had approved the architect's construction job, when it had not. The office of Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown is prosecuting the case.

MARAH HOWARD, 28, the President of Diversified Building Services, an expediting company in Fresh Meadows, N.Y. was arrested Wednesday, April 15, 2009. She was charged with two counts of Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree and one count each of Attempted Forgery in the Second Degree and Attempted Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, class E felonies. In addition, HOWARD is charged with Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree, a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction, a class E felony is punishable by up to four years in prison and a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to a year's incarceration.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Falsifying a City document is a shortsighted and foolhardy way to conduct business. The City has no tolerance for individuals who fabricate City approvals on construction projects where safety is a paramount concern."

DOI began its investigation after it was notified about an allegation that HOWARD had falsified a DOB document.

According to the criminal complaint, in November 2008, a Brooklyn-based architect hired HOWARD's company to expedite the filing of necessary documents with the DOB. On January 6, 2009, after receiving repeated complaints from the architect about her company's delay in filing those documents, HOWARD faxed the architect a purported print-out of DOB's web page, falsely stating that DOB had approved the architect's submitted application for a residential construction job on 14th Street in Brooklyn.

The architect later received the necessary approval from DOB to renovate the building's interior.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DOB Commissioner Robert LiMandri and Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, and their staffs, for their assistance in this investigation.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for DOB Michael Carroll, Deputy Inspector General Edward Zinser, Assistant Inspector General Byron Biggerstaff, Chief Investigator James McElligott and Special Investigator Sadie Lopez, under the supervision of Assistant Deputy Commissioner John Kantor.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Get the worms out of the Big Apple. To report someone ripping off the City, call DOI at (212) 825-5959.