



The City of New York
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TLC EMPLOYEE ARRESTED FOR STEALING A \$400 MONEY ORDER
– Taxi driver thought he was paying a summons not defendant's debt –

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of JOHN TOWNSEND, a Clerical Aide for the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC), for stealing a \$400.00 US Postal Money Order a taxi driver had submitted to TLC to pay for an outstanding summons.

TOWNSEND, 35, of the Bronx, has been charged with Petit Larceny.

DOI's investigation began after a taxi driver reported that he had had unusual conversations with a TLC clerk, who had insisted the driver either pay cash or submit a blank money order to pay for a \$400 summons that dated back to 2000. In addition, the TLC clerk wrongly told the driver that he could not contest the summons because it was too old. When the driver gave Townsend a money order made payable to TLC, Townsend instructed the driver to purchase a new money order and to leave the payee field blank. The driver told DOI he complied because he wanted to renew his license and could not do so with an outstanding summons. DOI investigators subsequently recovered the \$400.00 money order and found that it had been made payable to and cashed by an individual in Long Island. TOWNSEND apparently owed the individual money.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked TLC Commissioner Matthew Daus and his staff for their assistance during the investigation, which was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner Michael Caruso, and members of his staff, including DOI's Inspector General for TLC Tim Crowe, Chief Investigator James Christo, Special Investigator Jared Feirstein, and Correction Officer Investigator Cindy Tsui. Commissioner Gill Hearn also thanked Postal Inspector Sean Perkins of the United States Postal Service for his assistance during the investigation.

The Office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is handling the matter with Assistant District Attorney Douglas Kaufman prosecuting.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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