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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New York City Employee Indicted for Stealing Approximately \$624,000

*Defendant Worked as Associate Retirement Benefits Examiner at NYCERS,
Allegedly Stole Pension Checks from Two Retired Individuals*

Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, together with New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber, today announced that a Brooklyn man has been arraigned on an indictment in which he is charged with corrupting the government, grand larceny, identity theft, and offering a false instrument for filing for allegedly stealing \$624,000 from two retired New York City employees' pensions.

District Attorney Gonzalez said, "This defendant is accused of exploiting his trusted position to steal hundreds of thousands of dollars from the New York City Employee Retirement System, betraying retirees' dignity and the public trust. The financial security of more than 350,000 current and former city employees who rely on NYCERS is vital to their well-being and peace of mind. These are our neighbors—people who have dedicated their lives to serving New Yorkers—and we will not tolerate anyone preying on them. By pursuing this prosecution, we are sending a strong message that those who abuse their positions for personal gain will face serious consequences. I want to thank DOI for their thorough investigation and NYCERS for their cooperation in safeguarding the retirement funds of city employees."

Commissioner Strauber said, "This defendant used his access and knowledge of NYCERS' systems to illegally divert pension checks from the rightful recipients to himself, bypassing internal controls, as alleged. As a result of vulnerabilities identified during our investigation, DOI will make recommendations to strengthen NYCERS' systems, including increased oversight of changes to pensioners' account information. I thank the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office for working with

DOI to protect City pensioner funds.”

NYCERS’ Executive Director Melanie Whinnery said, “NYCERS strongly condemns the alleged actions of the employee. Their conduct, if proven true in a court of law, is a breach of trust and does not reflect NYCERS’ values nor our commitment to serving our clients with integrity and excellence. We take the safety and security of our clients’ pension accounts very seriously and we are cooperating fully with the Brooklyn District Attorney’s office and the NYC Department of Investigation in this matter.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Gregory Mathieu, 40, of Canarsie, Brooklyn. He was arraigned today before Brooklyn Supreme Court Justice Danny Chun on a nine-count indictment in which he is charged with first-degree corrupting the government, two counts of second-degree grand larceny, two counts of first-degree identity theft, and four counts of first-degree offering a false instrument for filing. He was released without bail and ordered to return to court on February 5, 2025.

It is alleged that between February 8, 2021 and January 2, 2024, the defendant stole approximately \$624,000 from the New York City Employees’ Retirement System (NYCERS), where he worked as an Associate Retirement Benefits Examiner.

It is alleged that the defendant reactivated suspended pension payments of a retired Department of Sanitation supervisor who had not been reported as deceased after he died at age 63, stealing retroactive payments of approximately \$242,000 and monthly payments between May 2021 and January 2024 of approximately \$5,700.

Furthermore, it is alleged, the defendant stole approximately \$199,000 from a 75-year-old retired Associated Railroad Signal Specialist employed by the MTA/NYC Transit whose account was suspended because he failed to cash his pension checks. He did not take steps to reactive his account until January 2024, which led to the discovery of the alleged thefts by the defendant.

Mathieu has been employed by NYCERS for approximately 15 years. He is currently suspended with pay.

The case was investigated by DOI Confidential Investigator Farhana Begum with DOI’s Office of

the Inspector General for NYCERS and supervised by Assistant Inspector General Shakina Griffith, Assistant Inspector General Jeffrey Freeman, Deputy Inspector General Aleksandro Tilka, Inspector General Ann Petterson, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Christopher Ryan and Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella.

Kings County Detective Investigators further assisted in the investigation.

The District Attorney thanked NYCERS' Fraud Unit for their assistance on the case.

The case is being prosecuted by Senior Assistant District Attorney Theresa Robitaille, of the District Attorney's Organized Crime and Racketeering Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Adam Libove, Deputy Chief of the Public Integrity Bureau, and Assistant District Attorney Laura Neubauer, Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Assistant District Attorney Michel Spanakos, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Investigations Division and Assistant District Attorney Patricia McNeill, Chief of the Investigations Division.

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An indictment is an accusatory instrument and not proof of a defendant's guilt.
