

June 7, 2022

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL: COOK COUNTY WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DEFRAUDING CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY OUT OF APPROXIMATELY \$188,000

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a Cook County woman pleaded guilty to charges alleging she fraudulently collected rental assistance from the Chicago Housing Authority for a home she resided in and owned.

Evelyn Massey, 69, of Chicago pleaded guilty Monday in Cook County Circuit Court to one count of wire fraud. She will be sentenced at a hearing in August.

"I am committed to protecting rental assistance for the thousands of residents and families who rely on it to stay in their homes," Raoul said. "Defrauding the people by misusing these resources will not be tolerated."

An investigation by the Chicago Housing Authority's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) revealed that Massey received approximately \$188,000 in rental assistance that she was not entitled to for a home she owned and lived in from November 2003 to February 2018.

Massey became a Chicago Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher (CHA-HCV) recipient in 1994. She rented a house owned by her father, which, at the time, was permitted under the program. As a CHA-HCV recipient, taxpayers paid all or a portion of her housing rental payments.

According to the OIG investigation, six years after receiving continuous CHA-HCV payments, Massey's father died, and the home was ultimately deeded to her. Instead of notifying the CHA about her ownership, she submitted documents claiming she was not the owner, despite being the recorded owner and receiving a loan secured by a mortgage on the property.

"While others sometimes wait decades to receive an HCV voucher, Ms. Massey deliberately defrauded the CHA of more than \$188,000 in rental assistance payments to live in her own house," said Kathryn Richards, Inspector General for the Chicago Housing Authority. "The CHA OIG aggressively pursues fraud on CHA's affordable housing programs to ensure these limited resources reach those who need them most. The OIG thanks the Attorney General's Office for their partnership on this case."

Assistant Attorney General Haley Bookhout and Assistant Attorney General Jonas Harger are prosecuting the case for Raoul's Public Integrity Bureau.