



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the
United States Attorney
for the
District of Nebraska
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October 16, 2009

United States Attorney Deborah R. Gilg and the Office of Inspector General for the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development announce the following information for the attention of the media:

Event Triggering this Release:

On October 16, 2009, Cynthia Ellis was sentenced following her conviction for defrauding the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Magistrate Judge Thomas D. Thalken sentenced Ellis to two years probation and ordered her to pay restitution in the amount of \$4,900.

During 2003 and 2004, Ellis was an employee of the Omaha Housing Authority. During this time period she was also receiving HUD rental payment assistance through the Douglas County Housing Authority. Under this program, Ellis was required to submit annual recertifications to the Douglas County Housing Authority in which she was to disclose the total income of all household members who were 18 and older and she was to list the names of all persons residing in the residence. The Douglas County Housing Authority utilized that information to determine the amount of rental assistance Ellis was eligible for and the size of unit she was entitled to live in. Any changes in income or household composition were to be immediately reported.

Ellis failed to list the income of her adult daughter in either her 2003 or her 2004 recertifications. Additionally, when the daughter moved out in 2004, Ellis failed to report the change in her household composition. As a result, HUD, through the Douglas County Housing Authority, paid a greater amount of rental assistance than Ellis was eligible to receive and kept her in a larger unit than she was otherwise entitled to under the program. The Douglas County Housing Authority terminated Ellis from the program effective December 31, 2004 because of her failure to truthfully report.

Name of Defendant: Cynthia Ellis

AKA:

Age: 42

City of residence: Omaha, Nebraska

Crime(s) Charged and Potential Penalty (A CHARGE is merely an accusation and every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty): Defrauding the Department of Housing and Urban Development in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1012. The maximum penalty is one year of imprisonment and/or a \$100,000 fine and one year of supervised release.

Specific Location of Alleged Crime: Omaha, Nebraska

Location of Arrest: The defendant appeared voluntarily

Alleged Dollar Loss/Type and Quantity of Drug: \$4,900

Others Charged in Same Scheme:

Relevant Dates:

Date of Alleged Crime: January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2004

Federal Arrest Date:

Date Complaint Issued:

Indictment Returned Date: Information filed on October 13, 2009

Initial Appearance Date: October 16, 2009

Plea or Trial and Date(s): October 16, 2009

Sentencing Date: October 16, 2009

Next Court Hearing Type and Date:

Assigned Magistrate Judge: Hon. Thomas D. Thalken

Held without Bond, or Released from Custody: released

In Continuous Custody Since:

Assigned District Court Judge: none assigned

Initials of Assigned AUSA/Preparer of THIS Release: DRS