

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.  
Western District of New York

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## **ROCHESTER MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX FRAUD CHARGES**

ROCHESTER, N.Y.-- U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Leonardo Valdez, 38, of Rochester, New York, pleaded guilty to helping to prepare false tax returns before U.S. District Court Judge Charles J. Siragusa. The charge carries a maximum penalty of three years in prison, a \$100,000 fine, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John J. Field, who is handling the case, stated that Valdez was a tax preparer doing business as Mastermind Income Tax of Rochester. Between 2006 and 2008, the defendant counseled numerous individuals to claim false deductions on their income tax returns which resulted in these individuals obtaining substantially larger tax refunds than they should have received.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, under the direction of Special Agent-in-Charge Charles R. Pine.

Sentencing is scheduled for February 8, 2012, at 3:45 p.m. before Judge Siragusa.

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