




Memorandum



Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General
A State of Florida Commission on Law Enforcement Accredited Agency
19 West Flagler Street ♦ Suite 220 ♦ Miami, Florida 33130
Phone: (305) 375-1946 ♦ Fax: (305) 579-2656
Visit our website at: www.miamidadeig.org

To: The Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor, Miami-Dade County
The Honorable Jean Monestime, Chairman
and Members, Board of County Commissioners, Miami-Dade County

From: Mary T. Cagle, Inspector General 

Date: January 15, 2016

Subject: Trio Sentenced for Fraudulently Designating Children as “At-Risk” in Referrals to the County’s Former Child Development Services Division; Ref. IG13-06

Ana Marcano (Marcano), entered a plea and was sentenced yesterday to two years of community control (house arrest) followed by ten years of probation on charges of Organized Scheme to Defraud and Uttering Forged Instruments. Marcano was the last defendant to be sentenced of a trio criminally charged last February as the result of an investigation by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the State Attorney’s Office.

Marcano pled guilty and was adjudicated guilty for her part in a scheme to defraud monies slated for children’s daycare and pre-school services intended to assist needy children in Miami-Dade County. In November 2015, Scarlette Jarquin (Jarquin) and her husband Allan Diaz (Diaz) entered pleas and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors in the case against Marcano. Jarquin was sentenced to two years of community control (house arrest) followed by five years of probation on a charge of Organized Scheme to Defraud. Diaz was sentenced to one year of probation on a charge of Petit Theft.

The OIG investigation found that Jarquin and her husband Diaz recruited low-income mothers and promised, for a fee, to expedite their applications for the Florida School Readiness Program (Program). The Program offers financial assistance to families for early education and childcare, and is administered locally by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. Until July 2013, the Miami-Dade County Community Action & Human Services Department (CAHSD) contracted with the Early Learning Coalition to determine eligibility, process referrals, and provide payments to daycare centers.

The Program provides immediate assistance to kids determined to be “at-risk” by the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) or by a Community-Based Care Lead Agency contracted by DCF, such as Our Kids, in Miami-Dade County. The Children’s Home Society (CHS) provides similar services as a subcontractor to Our Kids. Marcano,

who was employed by CHS, was the key access point for the scheme. Through her former employment at CHS, Marcano submitted false and fraudulent applications to CAHSD's Child Development Services Division. The referral forms submitted by Marcano designated the children as "at-risk" and eligible to receive immediate placement ahead of families already on a waiting list for the Program.

The investigation found that the trio charged parents from \$100 to \$500 in cash per child, per referral. None of the parents were aware the applications fraudulently designated their children as "at risk" kids. Marcano, Jarquin and Diaz were ordered to pay restitution, totaling over \$162,000, to the Florida Office of Early Learning. Costs of investigation to the OIG were also ordered.

The OIG is grateful for the cooperation of all the stakeholder agencies and the assistance of our law enforcement partners in making this a successful prosecutorial outcome.

cc: Alex Ferro, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Russell Benford, Deputy Mayor
Lucia Davis-Raiford, Director, Community Action and Human Services Department
Cathy Jackson, Director, Audit & Management Services Department
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor
Rodney J. MacKinnon, Executive Director, Office of Early Learning, State of Florida
Kristopher Roberts, Special Agent, HHS-OIG
Evelio Torres, CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Jackie Gonzalez, CEO, Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc.
Rebecca McGuire, Executive Director, Children's Home Society