



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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Release #37-2025
nyc.gov/doi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

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CITY HEALTH + HOSPITALS ENGINEER PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING NEARLY \$22,000 IN WAGES

Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), and Alvin Bragg, Manhattan District Attorney, jointly announced the arrest and guilty plea today of a City Health + Hospitals ("NYC H+H") Senior Engineer for theft of almost \$21,985.87 in City wages, between January 2024 and February 2025. DOI received an anonymous complaint that led to this investigation and worked jointly with the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, which is prosecuting the case.

NICHOLAS RUSZALA, 35, of Cranford, New Jersey, is charged with one count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class D felony. During his court appearance today in Manhattan Criminal Court, pursuant to a plea agreement, RUSZALA pled guilty to Petit Larceny, a class A misdemeanor, and paid back the money stolen from NYC H+H.

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber said, "This City employee falsely claimed to be at work for 205 hours when in fact he was not and stole funds from the City in the form of wages that he had not earned. Today he takes responsibility for that conduct, and returns the stolen funds to the City's Health + Hospitals. I thank our partners on this investigation, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, for their commitment to protect City funds."

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said, "This prosecution ensures the return of more than \$21,000 in City wages paid for time never worked. I thank Commissioner Strauber and the team at DOI for their ongoing partnership and commitment to rooting out fraud that harms our City."

According to the criminal complaint, RUSZALA is employed as a Senior Engineer at NYC H+H and his position requires him to work on site, at locations in Manhattan. He did not have permission or the capability to perform his job from home. The defendant was paid an hourly wage of \$87.71 and an overtime hourly rate of \$131.56. DOI reviewed timesheets submitted by the defendant between January 1, 2024 through the end of February 2025 and compared them to License Plate Reader information that captured the defendant's vehicle leaving Manhattan. DOI found that the defendant was neither at work nor in Manhattan for approximately 205 hours that he represented he was working. As a result of these findings, it was determined that he stole approximately 205 hours of work time from NYC H+H, valued at approximately \$21,985.87.

RUSZALA began his employment with NYC H+H in April 2019 and currently receives an annual salary of approximately \$146,000.

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Commissioner Strauber thanked Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg and his staff for their partnership on this investigation, including the District Attorney's Financial Frauds Bureau, specifically Bureau Chief Kofi G. Sansculotte and Assistant District Attorney Matthew J. Jacinto who is handling the prosecution. Commissioner Strauber also thanked Dr. Mitchell Katz, NYC H+H President and Chief Executive Officer, for his and his staff's cooperation, including Chief Executive Officer/Metropolitan Julian John.

At DOI, the investigation was conducted by Special Investigator Christopher J. Bender of DOI's Office of the Inspector General for NYC H+H, and was supervised by Assistant Inspector General Mark Moran, Deputy Inspector General Robin Womack, Inspector General Cornelius Clancy, Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives Christopher Ryan, and Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country and New York City's corruption watchdog. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

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