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**MAIL CARRIER CHARGED WITH STEALING CREDIT CARD FROM MAIL ROUTE
AND USING IT TO PAY FOR \$8,000 PLASTIC SURGERY**

Defendant Faces Up to Seven Years in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Shakera Small, a United States Postal Service mail carrier, has been charged with identity theft, grand larceny and other crimes for allegedly using a credit card stolen from her postal route. The woman is accused of using that charge card to pay for an \$8,000 surgical procedure at a Long Island medical office in September 2019.

District Attorney Katz said, "Credit card fraud is a serious crime. Bogus charges can ruin a person's credit rating and affect one's ability to buy a home, a car or even rent an apartment. The crime alleged here was a betrayal of the public trust and an insult to the thousands and thousands of hardworking postal employees who do their jobs with integrity."

Small, 31, of 161st Street in Jamaica, Queens, was arraigned last night before Queens Criminal Court Judge Toko Serita on a complaint charging her with grand larceny in the third, criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree, identity theft in the first degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the fourth degree, falsifying business records in the first degree and unlawful possession of personal identification information in the third degree. Judge Serita ordered the defendant to return to Court on May 6, 2021. If convicted Small faces up to seven years in prison.

According to the charges, between August and September of 2019, Small was assigned to deliver mail to an address on 168th Street in Jamaica, Queens. During that time, a man who lived on that street received a credit card statement in which there was an \$8,000 charge to Long Island Plastic Surgery. The victim contacted the bank and informed it that he had not authorized a charge for \$8,000 and furthermore he had never actually received the card in the mail.

According to the complaint, Small used an alias when she visited the Babylon office of Long Island Plastic Surgery on August 17, 2019. At that time, the defendant had a consultation for an elective surgical procedure. She presented the office representatives with an allegedly forged Connecticut driver's license in the name of Christine Petrow. A few days later, she provided the office with a credit card to charge a \$1,000 deposit for a surgery.

Continuing, according to the complaint, the charge card Small used to make a \$1,000 deposit was linked to her actual credit union bank account. However, on August 30, 2019, when the defendant paid the balance due for the procedure, she allegedly used the stolen credit card.

The DA said, Small underwent surgery on September 3, 2019.

The investigation was conducted by United States Postal Inspector Kristin Walunas, of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the supervision of Team Leader Glen McKechnie, of the USPIS, and under the overall supervision of the USPIS Inspector in Charge Philip R. Bartlett, New York Division, with the assistance of the U.S. Postal Service, Office of the Inspector General. Also assisting in the investigation, Detective Joseph Augello, of the New York City Police Department's Queens South Grand Larceny Division, under the supervision of Lieutenant Glenn Kennedy, Commanding Officer of the Queens South Grand Larceny Division, Captain Patrick Davis, Zone Commander Grand Larceny Division, and under the overall supervision of Deputy Inspector Patrick Cortright, Commanding Officer Grand Larceny Division.

Assistant District Attorneys Benjamin Kramer-Eisenbud and Catherine Jahn, of the District Attorney's Major Economic Crimes Bureau, are prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Mary Lowenburg, Bureau Chief, Catherine Kane and Jonathan Scharf, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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