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**MADIGAN: CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY VENDOR CHARGED WITH THEFT & FORGERY**

**Chicago** — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) today announced theft and forgery charges against a former CHA vendor for making and depositing fraudulent CHA checks totaling over \$193,000.

Madigan charged Mohd A. Assaf, 36, of Lombard, Ill., the owner of M&M Painting Services Inc., with five counts of forgery and four counts of theft in Cook County Circuit Court. Additionally, Madigan's office charged Assaf with four counts of forgery and three counts of theft in DuPage County Circuit Court.

Madigan alleged that Assaf cashed over \$193,000 in fraudulent CHA checks at currency exchanges and financial institutions in both Cook and DuPage counties between November 2016 and February 2018. Assaf is being held without bail.

"The defendant exploited his work for the Chicago Housing Authority to steal resources intended for public housing residents," Madigan said. "I appreciate the work of the CHA's Office of the Inspector General in this investigation."

"Inspector General Elissa Rhee-Lee and her team continue to be persistent in pursuit of theft and fraud," CHA CEO Eugene Jones, Jr. said. "They should be commended for holding CHA contractors to the highest ethical standards."

"The defendant Mohd Assaf was a CHA contractor who acted with impunity for the last several years," CHA Inspector General Elissa Rhee-Lee said. "He has left a trail of victims including the CHA. I commend the Assistant Attorney General Lisa Hennelly and CHA OIG Investigator Justin King for their persistence in bringing forth a day of reckoning for Assaf."

Assaf's next court appearance is April 18 before Cook County Judge Arthur Hill, Jr. The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

The investigation was conducted by the Chicago Housing Authority Office of the Inspector General. Assistant Attorney General Lisa Hennelly is handling the case for Madigan's Public Integrity Bureau.

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