

# **63-year old Massachusetts woman sentenced for over \$250,000 in benefits fraud over 12 years**

“A Massachusetts woman was sentenced yesterday for fraudulently receiving Social Security disability benefits, MassHealth, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and Section 8 housing assistance.

Maribel Rodriguez, 63, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Nathaniel M. Gorton to time served (approximately one day) and three years of supervised release, with the first 15 months to be spent in home confinement. She was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$253,199.57 to the agencies she defrauded. On March 4, 2022, Rodriguez pleaded guilty to four counts of theft of public funds and two counts of making false statements.

Over a period of approximately 12 years, Rodriguez stole \$68,223 in Social Security benefits, \$1,908 in MassHealth benefits, \$21,790 in SNAP benefits (previously known as Food Stamps) and \$161,277 in Section 8 housing assistance benefits. In June 2016, she falsely informed the Social Security Administration that she lived alone when, in fact, she was living with her husband. Similarly, Rodriguez falsely told the Marlborough Community Development Authority in May 2017 that she was the only member of her household.

United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins; Sharon MacDermott, Special Agent in Charge of the Social Security Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, Boston Field Division; Phillip M. Coyne, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Health and Human Service’s Office of

Inspector General, Boston Regional Office; Suzanne M. Bump, State Auditor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and Christina Scaringi, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General, Northeast Regional Office, made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Elianna J. Nuzum of Rollins' Major Crimes Unit prosecuted the case."