



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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For Immediate Release
March 25, 2015

News Release 2015-06

**SECOND DIRECTOR OF WAIANAE COMMUNITY OUTREACH CHARGED WITH
DIVERTING MORE THAN \$200,000 FOR PERSONAL USE**

HONOLULU – Sophina Placencia, age 32, was arrested today for 5 felony theft counts for improperly diverting more than \$200,000.00 in state funds from Waianae Community Outreach for use by herself, family members and friends, Attorney General Doug Chin announced.

“This set of charges against Ms. Placencia comes as a result of charges filed last week against former program director Laura Pitolo. Ms. Placencia was the executive director at the time she made allegations theft allegations against Ms. Pitolo. During the course of investigating Ms. Pitolo’s theft, special agents for the Attorney General determined that Ms. Placencia was also misusing state funds at Waianae Community Outreach,” said Deputy Attorney General Michael Kagami of the Criminal Justice Division. “The evidence uncovered against Ms. Placencia also indicates that she diverted a substantial amount of state funds for personal use.”

“This office will continue to vigorously investigate and prosecute individuals that violate the public trust. Individuals that receive State funds must be held accountable for the proper use of those funds,” said Chin. “These thefts directly impacted the services provided to our homeless individuals and families in the Waianae area.”

Ms. Placencia was charged with 4 counts of first degree theft, each punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a \$25,000.00 fine, and 1 count of second degree theft, punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a \$10,000.00 fine. Ms. Placencia is presumed innocent unless and until she is found guilty of the charges beyond a reasonable doubt.

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