



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Timothy Jeffries
Director

December 23, 2015

Ms. Emily Bregel
Arizona Daily Star
4850 South Park Ave
Tucson, AZ 85714

Dear Ms. Bregel:

The Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES) received your request for records dated December 11, 2015. You specifically requested information concerning any information or investigations involving The Giving Tree II and related organizations.

The Department has complied with your request and includes the responsive documents with this letter.

In the event DES has produced any document containing unredacted confidential or privileged information, DES hereby asserts that such disclosure was accidental and does not waive any protections afforded under law. If you encounter any accidental disclosures, please return the document with the unredacted confidential information to DES, and DES will return a properly redacted copy to you.

If you have any questions regarding these records, please contact my office at 602-542-2553 or via email at ToddStone@azdes.gov.

Respectfully,

Todd Stone

Todd Stone
Public Information Officer
Department of Economic Security

INTEROFFICE MEMO

DATE: APR 12 2010

TO: Veronica Bossack 939A
Assistant Director
Division of Benefits &
Medical Eligibility

FROM: Van Braswell o80A
Assistant Director
Division of Employee
Services and Support

SUBJECT: Libby Wright IA 10-016
Fraud

Attached is the Report of Investigation regarding the Libby Wright matter. I have reviewed the report and see no need for further investigation.

Please provide a written response to the Chief of the Office of Special Investigations and Office of Internal Affairs, Rene Rebillot (Site 064C), within thirty (30) working days of receiving this report detailing the action or intended action to be taken along with expected completion dates.

If you have any questions, or we can be of further assistance, you can reach Rene Rebillot at [REDACTED]

Attachment

cc: J. White 040A
M. Gill 060A
IA File



OFFICE OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

IA 10-016

REPORT DATE : APR 12 2010

DIVISION : Allegations came to the Department's attention via
[REDACTED]

SUBJECT : Libby Wright / Giving Tree Outreach Program

EIN : N/A

COUNTY : Pima

INVESTIGATOR : Jack Perrin #927 PHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]

PER THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY (DES) POLICY 01-24-01, DISSEMINATION OF INTERNAL INVESTIGATION REPORTS CONDUCTED BY THE OFFICE OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (OIA), IS RESTRICTED TO THE DIRECTOR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, THE APPROPRIATE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND THE DES HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION AND/OR OTHERWISEAS REQUIRED BY LAW. DISSEMINATION OF OIA REPORTS TO ANY OTHER PERSON(S) IS PROHIBITED UNLESS APPROVED BY THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND SUPPORT (DESS). CONTACT THE CHIEF, OFFICE OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (OIA) FOR DISSEMINATION OR COPYING APPROVAL: TELEPHONE [REDACTED]

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION WHOSE EMPLOYEE WAS INVESTIGATED IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REPORTING THE ACTION TAKEN. TO ADDRESS THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION, CONTACT THE MANAGER, (DESS), OFFICE OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE RESPONSIBLE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR WILL ALSO NOTIFY THE SUBJECT (EMPLOYEE) OF THE OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION, IN WRITING, REGARDLESS IF THE ALLEGATIONS WERE FOUNDED OR UNFOUNDED. WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO THE SUBJECT MUST BE WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE RECEIPT OF THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION.

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REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
IA 10-016

ALLEGATION: Libby Wright and the Giving Tree Outreach Program are fraudulently obtaining / appropriating Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, commonly called food stamp benefits, from DES clients.

FINDING: Unsubstantiated

INVESTIGATIVE DETAILS & SUMMARY

The Department of Economic Security (DES), through the Director of Communications received information from an Arizona Daily Star Investigative reporter of possible fraudulent use of food stamps by Libby Wright and the Giving Tree Outreach Program. The Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility (DBME) conducted an inquiry / query of Libby Wright and the Giving Tree Outreach Program. The results of this inquiry / query identified (44) DES clients residing at The Giving Tree (GT) and receiving Food Stamp Benefits. Most of the DES clients were scheduled for telephonic interviews. Three clients were scheduled for FAA Office interviews. This investigator planned to talk to the three scheduled for office interviews, however, none of them appeared for the interview. The fact that these clients listed the Giving Tree as their residence was not by itself an indication of fraud; therefore, investigations into these clients were not pursued. The clients who had already identified themselves to [REDACTED] were contacted and interviewed.

The Giving Tree Outreach Program is a non-profit, faith based community organization serving Tucson's homeless and needy since 1988. Libby Wright is the Founder, Director and CEO of the Giving Tree. Ms. Wright has been associated for 30 years in working with the needs of the homeless and less fortunate individuals of our society.

This investigator interviewed a number of DES clients and former clients. People affiliated with the Giving Tree were also interviewed. DES does not have the jurisdiction, authority or the responsibility to investigate the Giving Tree Outreach Program's potential violation of the Federal Nutrition Service (FNS) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (feeding facilities) guidelines. The Office of Internal Affairs (OLA) primary focus was to determine if Libby Wright, who is not a DES client, and people connected with The Giving Tree Outreach Program effectively participated in the Food Stamp Program in any fraudulent manner within the jurisdiction of DES.

DES has authority to issue benefit assistance to eligible DES clients. DES clients are legally entitled to use their benefit assistance as they please within the intent and scope of the program. Once an eligible client has received the food allotment, the client may share the food purchased with others, therefore, the DES clients could allow others to eat food purchased with their food stamps

Some of the DES clients who had resided at The Giving Tree Outreach Program indicated they had falsified information on their benefit application in order to obtain and use Food Stamp Benefit Assistance at the direction of Libby Wright and/or the Giving

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REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
IA 10-016

Tree staff, however, no file documentation could be found to support their statements. In addition the investigation could not locate any documentation to support and substantiate the allegations of fraud against Libby Wright and/or Giving Tree Staff.

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IA 10-016

WITNESS LIST

Libby Wright
Title: Owner / Executive Director
Of the Giving Tree Outreach Program
931 N. Swan Road
Tucson, AZ 85711
Telephone No. [REDACTED]

Subject

[REDACTED]
DES client
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
DES Client
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
DES client
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
DES client
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Jack Perrin #927
Special Investigator
Office of Internal Affairs
400 W. Congress Street #420
Tucson, AZ 85701
Telephone No. [REDACTED]

Case Investigator

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Arizona Department of Economic Security

Office of Internal Affairs

400 W. Congress St.

Tucson, AZ 85701.

FAX: 520-770-3022

520-628-6810 X265

Giving Tree Organization - Child Welfare Activities

The following information has been developed during the course of OIA's investigation of Libby Wright and the Giving Tree Outreach Program, indicating that Ms. Wright is in fact operating an unlicensed Child Welfare Agency.

Investigative leads established that [REDACTED] a 15 year old female [REDACTED] along with [REDACTED] have been residing at the Giving Tree Outreach Program since November 15, 2008, possibly longer. On this date the [REDACTED] executed a release and waiver of liability document to the Giving Tree Outreach Program. This document does not make Ms. Wright the legal guardian of [REDACTED].

On March 26, 2009, [REDACTED] was reported as a Runaway Juvenile from the Giving Tree Outreach Program, [REDACTED].

On March 29, 2009, Tucson Police Department apprehended Runaway Juvenile [REDACTED] at approximately 10 AM. [REDACTED] was detained under ARS 8-303 and released to Libby Wright Director of the Grace Group Home [REDACTED] Connect-up Report Numbers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. During Tucson Police Department's contact with [REDACTED], [REDACTED] complained of not feeling well but refused treatment at that time.

Later this date, Libby Wright took [REDACTED] to St Joseph's Hospital because [REDACTED] was not feeling well. At St. Joseph's Hospital, [REDACTED] submitted a "Treat and Release Application" for AHCCCS medical benefits for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. On the AHCCCS application [REDACTED] listed Libby Wright as [REDACTED] "Authorized Representative." During the hospital visit [REDACTED] told the nursing staff that [REDACTED] had been sexually assaulted. ST. Joseph's Hospital Nursing Staff reported the sexual assault to the Tucson Police Department [REDACTED]. Present at St Joseph's Hospital during the medical examination and the subsequent TPD interview was Libby Wright [REDACTED] "representative" from the Giving Tree Outreach Program.

[REDACTED] was released from St. Joseph's Hospital and transported by Libby Wright to the Children's Advocacy Center for a forensic interview. The interview was completed and [REDACTED] left with Libby Wright.

Documentation from the DES Treat and Release AHCCCS Application, Libby Wright's Giving Tree Missing Child alert e-mail and the Tucson Police Department reports are provided for your review.

Investigative Note: Ms. Wright's Missing Child alert e-mail sent on Sunday March 29, 2009 at 8:06 AM. stated the following; [REDACTED] brought them to the Giving Tree Outreach Program and left them while [REDACTED] went to the store. Ms. Wright stated that [REDACTED] never came back. This statement is contradicted by the fact that [REDACTED] executed a release and waiver of liability document that purports to transfer custody of [REDACTED] to the Giving Tree Outreach Program before [REDACTED] left.

All documentation supports the determination that Ms. Wright is in fact operating an unlicensed Child Welfare Agency.

Jack Perrin
Special Investigator
Office of Internal Affairs



Janice Brewer
Governor

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

1624 W Adams s/c 062C

Phoenix, AZ 85007

(602) 542-9371

Clarence H. Carter
Director

TO: Ken Moore
FROM: Robert Garcia
SUBJECT: Elisabeth "Libby" Wright-Glovingo (Cross Country Outreach)
DATE: August 8, 2013 13-0063

A preliminary inquiry revealed the complainant's allegations are in sync with Ms. Wright's usual method of operation, which is to open or operate homes established to shelter vulnerable children and adults. Once accepted into the home, Ms. Wright persuaded parents and vulnerable adults to transfer guardianship, executor, or payee status over to her. Once received, Ms. Wright retains the resident's SSI, Direct Express Debit Card, EBT card, or child support payments as random - as the complaint has alleged.

In the past, Ms. Wright was the director of The Giving Tree, which transferred ownership under questionable circumstances. Ms. Wright was also involved in operating The Grace Home, The Promise Home, and is linked to Cross Country Ministries. [REDACTED]

DHS, OLCR, CPS, and the Tucson Police Department are very familiar with Ms. Wright and her questionable practices. Although Arizona Corporation Commission records reveal Ms. Crystal Hart is the Statutory Agent for Cross Country Outreach, information gained by a member of the Office of Child Welfare Investigations (OCWI) demonstrates Ms. Wright is probably operating Cross Country Outreach as an unlicensed group home.

As of this date, OLCR, DHS and DDD report neither Cross Country Outreach nor Ms. Wright retain a current State license. Additionally, DHS reports "halfway homes" are not required to obtain a State license.



Division of Licensing Services
Bureau of Residential Facilities Licensing

400 West Congress, Suite 116
Tucson, Arizona 86701-1362
(520) 628-6966
(520) 628-6991 FAX

JANICE K. BREWER,
GOVERNOR
WILL HUMBLE, DIRECTOR

December 17, 2013

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

RE: The Giving Tree
Complaint Intake #AZ00117905
Investigation #46VR11

Dear [REDACTED]:

The Arizona Department of Health Services (Department) has concluded its investigation of the above referenced complaint. The Bureau of Residential Facilities Licensing determined whether the issue(s) that were raised in your complaint corresponded to the rules or statutes that regulate The Giving Tree.

Through the Department's investigation process, one or more surveyors conducted interviews with staff of the facility, residents that received services from the facility, and anyone else who may have been able to provide pertinent information. Surveyors also made observations during their time on site and reviewed records. The investigation may have also included the review of hospital, police, and other facility or state agency reports.

The Department was not able to find enough evidence to verify your allegation(s); however, it is appreciated that you took the time to make the Department aware of your concerns.

Thank you for bringing your concern(s) to the Department's attention. If you have any questions, please call our office at (520) 628-6965.

Sincerely,

Bob Chilcote
State Licensing Team Leader

BO/pg