

PRESS RELEASE

Connecticut Office of State Ethics Reaches \$2,228 Settlement for Ethics Violation

November 13, 2008

The Enforcement Division of the Office of State Ethics (OSE) executed a stipulation and consent order on November 7, 2008 with Pamela Fritz, a Community Training Home Monitor with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Ms. Fritz, a resident of Winsted, paid a civil penalty of \$2,000 for using her state position for the financial gain of her spouse's business, in addition to relinquishing the amount of that financial gain – \$228.

In July 2006, Ms. Fritz responded to a call at a DDS Community Training Home relating to an altercation between a DDS client and the Home's owner. During the altercation, a door at the Home was broken, and Ms. Fritz ordered the client to draft a check for the repair of the door in the amount of \$228.64. Rather than going through the standard channels, Ms. Fritz ordered that the check be made out to "F.C. Fritz Remodeling," a company owned and operated by her husband.

Connecticut General Statutes §1-84(c) provides, in part, that a public official or state employee may not use her position to obtain financial gain for herself, her spouse, or a business with which she is associated. By ordering the DDS client to write a check and ordering that the check be made out to a business with which she was associated, Ms. Fritz violated this section of the Code of Ethics.

Although there was an apparent urgency to repairing the door and Ms. Fritz believed the use of her husband's business was necessary for the repair to be completed on a weekend, a severe fine was imposed because of the nature of the situation, which involved a DDS client in an injured state.

"The prohibition on the use of a state employee's office for personal, financial gain is at the heart of the Code of Ethics," said OSE Executive Director, Carol Carson. "The Enforcement Division, in doing its work, is diligent in investigating and prosecuting such violations."

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