

CITY OF NEW YORK  
**Office of the Inspector General  
Teachers' Retirement System**  
80 MAIDEN LANE, 20TH FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10038

**ANASTASIA COLEMAN**  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

Telephone: (212) 510-1400  
Fax: (212) 510-1550  
[www.nycsci.org](http://www.nycsci.org)

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

October 7, 2025

Patricia Reilly  
Executive Director  
Teachers' Retirement System  
of the City of New York  
55 Water Street  
New York, NY 10041

Re: Alfredo Mateo  
Barbara Martino  
SCI Case #: 2024-02912

Dear Executive Director Reilly:

An investigation conducted by this office has substantiated that Alfredo Mateo ("Mateo"), a doorman at a Manhattan residential apartment building, with the assistance of Barbara Martino ("Martino"), engaged in a scheme to defraud New York City Teachers' Retirement System ("TRS") member [REDACTED], as well as her husband and beneficiary [REDACTED], when Mateo fraudulently diverted \$477,685 in retirement funds allocated to [REDACTED] to accounts controlled by Mateo.<sup>1</sup>

**I. Investigation & Findings:**

The investigation began when the office of the Inspector General ("IG") for TRS received a complaint from [REDACTED] reporting the misappropriation of funds from [REDACTED] TRS account.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Neither Mateo nor Martino are employees of the City of New York.

<sup>2</sup> Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District Anastasia Coleman also serves as the inspector general for TRS and the Board of Education Retirement System.

██████████ reported that on February 1, 2024, the TRS call center received a phone call from the fraud department at Santander Bank informing TRS that the bank received a suspicious deposit in the name of ██████████, but endorsed to Mateo, in the amount of \$146,000.

Upon further review, TRS found a total of six pension and Tax Deferred Annuity (“TDA”) checks that were fraudulently endorsed to Mateo after ██████████ reported date of death. ██████████ stated that Mateo, with the assistance of a New York State notary, later identified as Martino, misappropriated at least \$467,000 from ██████████ both before and after ██████████ reported date of death. ██████████ then provided IG investigators with the phone number that was used to contact TRS on May 9, 2023, and June 9, 2023, for calls related to ██████████ TRS account. Upon review, IG investigators identified this number as being registered to Mateo.

IG investigators spoke with ██████████ who stated that in August of 2023, Mateo attempted to deposit four checks, totaling \$156,784.74, each made payable to ██████████. ██████████ stated that Santander flagged the transactions as possible fraud as ██████████ was not listed on the account that Mateo was attempting to access. ██████████ told investigators that Santander paid \$30,000 to Mateo but withheld \$115,000 pending the results of an internal fraud investigation.

Investigators reviewed bank records received pursuant to subpoena related to a Santander Bank account owned by ██████████, as well as two additional accounts held by Mateo, one at Chase Bank and one at Citibank. This review revealed at least 35 transactions that resulted in funds being deposited into accounts controlled by Mateo. Of these transactions, IG investigators determined that nine checks totaling \$183,137 from ██████████ account, were deposited into accounts controlled by Mateo after ██████████ death on July 5, 2023; and two checks totaling \$13,400 from ██████████ account were deposited into accounts controlled by Mateo after ██████████ death on October 7, 2022. An accounting of all monies transferred from accounts owned by ██████████ and ██████████ to accounts controlled by Mateo totaled \$477,685.00.

IG investigators then reviewed an email sent by ██████████, which detailed a recorded phone conversation that occurred on March 3, 2024, more than a year after ██████████ death, between ██████████ and a male who purported to be ██████████. IG investigators subpoenaed records which revealed that the originating number of this call was established on February 21, 2023, and was registered to Mateo.

In a meeting with investigators, ██████████, from ██████████, stated that he represented Baghtchedjian as the Medicare attorney regarding the establishment of a guardianship for ██████████. ██████████ stated that the guardianship was created due to ██████████ lack of mental capacity, and its creation granted ██████████ control of ██████████ financial activities. ██████████ then noted that when ██████████ died in October of 2022, the court dissolved the guardianship and, as ██████████ had no next of kin, a court ordered guardian directed ██████████ finances. ██████████ stated that he was not involved in this matter following ██████████ passing.

Further investigation by IG investigators revealed that as of this writing, neither ██████████ nor ██████████ had any identified next of kin.

After reviewing the abovementioned bank and phone records, investigators conferred with the New York County District Attorney's Office ("DANY"), who partnered on this case for criminal prosecution. On May 21, 2025, SCI investigators were informed by DANY that Mateo pled guilty to Grand Larceny in the Second Degree, Identity Theft in the First Degree, and related charges.<sup>3</sup>

In a meeting with IG and DANY investigators, Martino stated that Mateo was her former son-in-law and worked as a doorman at a building on 110<sup>th</sup> Street and Riverside Drive. Martino admitted to investigators that she was a New York State Notary Public, and that she notarized documents for Mateo approximately five times, including the documents used to transfer funds from Hartmann to Mateo. Martino told investigators that she never met ██████████ or ██████████, nor was she aware of who they were when she notarized the TRS forms for Mateo. Martino stated that she would notarize documents for people she trusted and did not keep any records of what she notarized.<sup>4</sup>

## **II. Conclusion and Recommendation:**

Upon review of the above facts, we have substantiated that Alfredo Mateo engaged in a scheme to defraud TRS member ██████████, and her husband ██████████, by stealing checks made payable to ██████████ and ██████████ bank accounts and depositing them into accounts controlled by himself. Furthermore, Mateo caused multiple distributions from ██████████ TDA into accounts he controlled. This is based primarily on reviews of bank records revealing withdrawals from accounts belonging to ██████████ and ██████████, and corresponding deposits into accounts controlled by Mateo; phone records for numbers registered to Mateo which were used to contact TRS and Santander Bank, one of which corroborated a phone call, which occurred after the date of ██████████ death, between TRS and a male purporting to be ██████████.

Additionally, the IG substantiated allegations against Barbara Martino, who assisted Mateo in his scheme to fraudulently transfer funds payable to ██████████ and ██████████ into Mateo's accounts. This is based primarily on statements by Martino, who admitted to investigators that she notarized forms Mateo used to defraud ██████████ and ██████████ by giving him access to ██████████ accounts.

As neither Mateo nor Martino are employed by the New York City Department of Education ("DOE") or TRS, and both Mateo and Martino have already been referred to DANY for criminal prosecution, it is the position of this office that TRS seek repayment of the \$477,685.00 fraudulently withdrawn from ██████████ accounts, so that they may be directed to whomsoever it is determined has a legal right to receive it.

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<sup>3</sup> Mateo was sentenced on October 1, 2025, to one to three years in State prison. \$115,638 was recovered by DANY and paid as restitution, with a judgment order issued for an additional \$152,554.

<sup>4</sup> On December 17, 2024, IG investigators were informed by the assigned DANY Assistant District Attorney that, following a proffer agreement with Martino and her attorney, DANY would not seek an indictment of Martino.

In addition, we are forwarding a copy of this report to the New York State Department of State for any action they deem necessary regarding Barbara Martino's use of her New York State Notary Public status for criminal and otherwise inappropriate purposes.

Please respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of this letter as to any action taken regarding Alfredo Mateo, Barbara Martino, or the recommendations made herein.

Should you have any inquiries regarding the above, please contact Stephen Boniberger, the assigned attorney for this matter, at (212) 510-1440 or [sboniberger@nycsci.org](mailto:sboniberger@nycsci.org).

Sincerely,

ANASTASIA COLEMAN  
Inspector General

By: /s/ Daniel I. Schlachet  
Daniel I. Schlachet  
First Deputy Inspector General

AC:DS:SB:lr

cc: Thomas Brown, Chairperson, TRS  
Valerie Budzik, Esq., General Counsel, TRS