



STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE STATE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
**Final Report**  
**October 21, 2011**

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION AND FINDINGS

The New York State Inspector General found that Mathilda Nieves, a retired New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) employee, and Maria Canet, an accountant for a restaurant seeking a liquor license, conspired to expedite the approval of a liquor license application by paying an SLA employee to intervene in the application process.

In the fall of 2010, it came to the attention of SLA executives that a former employee had implied she was willing to pay an SLA employee for information about pending liquor license applications. The SLA referred the matter to the Inspector General's office. The Inspector General immediately commenced an investigation into the matter. This investigation confirmed that in fact Nieves, on behalf of her contact Canet, was offering a cash payment to an SLA employee in order to influence and ensure approval of the pending liquor license of a restaurant with which Canet was affiliated. Following its initial investigation, the Inspector General's office referred this matter to the New York County District Attorney, and worked with that office to prosecute the case.

On February 28, 2011, both Nieves and Canet were arrested for attempting to bribe SLA employees to expedite an application and charged with Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree,<sup>1</sup> a misdemeanor. On March 28 and April 1, 2011, respectively, Nieves and Canet pleaded guilty as charged and received a sentence of three years' probation and the maximum fine of \$1,000. A special condition of their sentences was that neither could have any contact with the SLA or any of its employees, nor could they participate in any way in the processing of liquor license applications in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> New York State Penal Law section 105.05(1).