



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Investigative Unit

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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OIU Contact: Agent-in-Charge Greg Croft  
(216) 898-1870 or (614) 752-2792

### Cleveland business and six individuals indicted on food stamp fraud crimes

**(Cleveland)** – On Thursday, May 21, a Cuyahoga County Grand Jury indicted a Cleveland business and six individuals on 20 counts of food stamp fraud related activity. The charges stem from a long-term food stamp fraud investigation, which began in 2011, by agents with the Ohio Investigative Unit.

Frank's Beverage, 12713 Woodside Ave., in Cleveland was indicted on two counts of trafficking in or illegal use of food stamps. Also, the owner Abdelhameed Hamdallah, 57, of Cleveland, was indicted on seven counts of varying degrees of trafficking in or illegal use of food stamps.

Cleveland residents Lavonia Duncan; 35; Johnita Wright; 27; and Sierra Kilgore; 27, were each indicted on one count each of trafficking in or illegal use of food stamps and theft. Anton Eadeh, 55, of North Olmstead, and Melanie Hamdallah, 51, of Cleveland, were each indicted on trafficking in or illegal use of food stamps and also petty theft.

Agents estimate \$113,550 in food stamp fraud and \$117,408 in theft took place at Frank's Beverage.

During the search warrant, agents also issued multiple administrative violations against the Frank's Beverage liquor permit for food stamp fraud and theft offenses. Once all criminal proceedings are complete, agents will present administrative charges to the Ohio Liquor Control Commission. The commission has the authority to issue penalties against the liquor permits such as fines, suspensions or revocations.

If you know of a location committing food stamp fraud, please notify the Ohio Investigative Unit by calling the #677 on your cell phone and your complaint will be investigated.

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*The Ohio Investigative Unit agents are plain-clothed fully sworn peace officers. OIU is charged with enforcing the state's liquor laws and is the only state law enforcement agency specifically tasked with investigating food stamp fraud crimes. Agents also investigate tobacco violations.*

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