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## **DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION CRACKS DOWN ON PREDATORY PRACTICES IN TAXI INDUSTRY**

***As part of 45-day review, Administration arrests man found to illegally  
repossess taxi medallions from owners***

**NEW YORK**—The de Blasio Administration today announced it arrested a Staten Island man accused of impersonating a City Marshal in order to repossess taxi cabs and medallions from unsuspecting taxi owners. The arrest of Anthony Medina is part of the actions taken by this Administration to protect medallion owners and was investigated as part of a 45-day review of taxi medallion brokers.

“This arrest provides some long-awaited justice for medallion owners who were made victim of predatory practices for far too long,” **said Mayor de Blasio**. “Hard-working taxi drivers represent the best of this city, and my Administration won’t stand by while innocent New Yorkers are exploited.”

Medina was arrested today by the Sheriff’s Department outside of his Staten Island home and charged with four separate counts of criminal impersonation of a New York City Marshal. For at least three years and across four boroughs, Medina allegedly impersonated a marshal to help him seize taxis, medallions, and rate cards from owners who were allegedly in default to private lenders.

The Department was able to confirm at least three different episodes where Medina, while impersonating a Marshal, harassed cabdrivers, including:

- An incident where Medina came to a medallion owner’s home in July 2016 to repossess his cab, medallion, meter and rate card while serving him with a false notice of seizure. Medina intimidated the man into surrendering the keys to his taxi, and the man also noticed that the car had already been broken into.
- An incident where Medina and an associate threateningly drove up to a parked taxi cab driver in the West Village in November 2017, shouting at him to get out of his taxi and give him the keys before serving him with a false notice of seizure and taking his vehicle.
- An incident where Medina broke into a taxi in Queens last May, removed a taxi medallion, rate card and meter, and left a false notice of seizure. After the medallion owner paid his debt, Medina, again impersonating a marshal, intimidated the man while returning the medallion, rate card and meter, telling him not to tell TLC that the medallion had been removed.

The Sheriff’s Department confirmed that Medina was not a marshal, police officer or member of the Sheriff’s Department, despite serving documents claiming he was acting on their behalf. Beyond that, Marshals are not authorized to repossess taxi medallions unless the contested value is under \$25,000.

Last month, the Sheriff's Department began investigating illegal repossessions and seizures by individuals outlined in the report, beginning by interviewing medallion owners and their attorneys. The Department also attended several Taxicab & Limousine Commission outreach events to gather information from owners and drivers in attendance. From these efforts, the Department gained evidence to show probable cause that Medina was impersonating a marshal and conducting the seizures.

Today's arrest is the latest step in the City's efforts to investigate predatory lending in the taxi industry. Last month, after a report in the *New York Times* exposed predatory practices within the industry, the Mayor ordered a 45-day review. The review is ongoing, and its findings will be announced this month.

The Sheriff's Office encourages any taxi owner who has had their medallion repossessed by Medina to come forward. You can report it at (718) 707-2100.

"This arrest marks an important moment for all New York City taxi drivers and demonstrates that this Administration is fully prepared to bring to justice those harmed," said **Deputy Mayor Laura Anglin**. "Taxi Medallion owners have already suffered a great deal and this Administration will continue to work across agencies to ensure we are investigating and finding those who have preyed upon these hard-working New Yorkers."

"This individual's actions as alleged are nothing short of brutal," said **Acting TLC Commissioner Bill Heizen**. "The City will not tolerate these kinds of illegal and callous actions against medallion owners."

"New York City Taxi Medallion owners have suffered grave financial difficulties over the past few years due to a predatory lending practices in the medallion financing industry, and taking advantage of their vulnerability is despicable," said **Finance Commissioner Jacques Jiha**. "As residents of this city, Taxi Medallion owners have legal rights and we are committed to protecting and preserving those rights. Any type of alleged impersonation of a Marshal, Sheriff or Police Officer to compel submission is an intimidation that will not be tolerated. I have directed the Sheriff to continue to investigate these allegations and arrest those found using this unlawful and criminal collection practice."