



## Justice Center for the Protection of People With Special Needs

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### **Sheltering Arms Worker Charged with Felony Counts for Abusing Person with Disabilities in Her Care** *Joint Prosecution by Justice Center & Bronx District Attorney's Office*

Bronx, NY – NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs Special Prosecutor Patricia E. Gunning today announced that a Brooklyn woman, who is employed by Sheltering Arms Children and Family Services, was arrested and arraigned on charges that she struck a person with a developmental disability. Sheltering Arms is licensed by the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities.

Ingrid Padilla (DOB: 08/15/48) appeared in Bronx Criminal Court on January 20, 2017 before the Honorable David Kirschner and was arraigned on the following charges:

- One count of Endangering the Welfare of an Incompetent or Physically Disabled Person in the First Degree, a class "E" felony;
- One count of Endangering the Welfare of an Incompetent or Physically Disabled Person in the Second Degree, a class "A" misdemeanor;
- One count of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Fourth Degree, a class "A" misdemeanor;
- One count of Menacing in the Second Degree, a class "A" misdemeanor; and
- One count of Attempted Assault in the Third Degree, a class "B" misdemeanor.

The charges in this case stem from a January 2016 incident in which the defendant is alleged to have struck the victim in the head with a hole punch.

Padilla has been suspended from her position. She was released on her own recognizance and is due back in court on March 13, 2017.

"Workers, like this defendant, who are trained to care for people with special needs and who disregard their responsibilities and act out with violence, must be held accountable," said Special Prosecutor Gunning. "We appreciate the conscientious employee who reported the incident. We are also grateful to the Bronx District Attorney and her staff for their dedication in bringing the resources of her office to bear in combatting the abuse and neglect of vulnerable persons. Together, we will work to see that this victim receives justice."

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark said, "We work closely with the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs because we must do all we can to protect the most vulnerable people from harm."

The case was investigated by Justice Center Investigator Kellie Hanley and is being co-prosecuted by Justice Center Assistant Special Prosecutor Edwin Ferguson and Bronx Assistant District Attorney Kellyanne Holohan.

#### About the Justice Center

The Justice Center began operations on June 30, 2013. It operates a toll-free hotline that receives reports of allegations of abuse, neglect and significant incidents 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone who witnesses or suspects the abuse or neglect of a person with special needs can make a report. Mandated reporters who have reasonable cause to suspect that a reportable incident has occurred by staff must report it to the Justice Center immediately upon discovery. The Justice Center is not a first responder so if a report involves an emergency situation, the caller is instructed to hang up and dial 9-1-1.

The Justice Center is authorized to investigate all reports of abuse and neglect, pursue administrative sanctions against staff found responsible for misconduct and its Special Prosecutor/Inspector General shares jurisdiction with local district attorneys to prosecute criminal offense allegations. The Justice Center notifies local district attorneys of all potential criminal cases.

Justice Center Individual and Family Support Advocates provide guidance and information to victims, their families, personal representatives, and guardians about the reporting and investigation process, offer support during criminal court proceedings, and are available to accompany victims during interviews and court appearances.

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*Editor's note: In compliance with Rule 3.6(b)(6) of the Rules of Professional Conduct, you are advised that a charge is an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.*