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**FORMER CITY INSPECTOR CONVICTED OF TAKING BRIBES TO HELP OBTAIN
STATE FOOD SANITATION CERTIFICATES FOR MORE THAN 500 INDIVIDUALS**

CHICAGO — A southwest suburban woman who was authorized by the Illinois Department of Public Health to teach food service sanitation classes and administer state certification exams was convicted of conspiracy to commit bribery for accepting at least \$79,650 in return for fraudulently arranging to provide bogus certificates for at least 531 individuals. The defendant, **Maryanne Koll**, a retired Chicago Public Health Department food sanitation inspector who operated Kollmar Food Safety Institute from her home in Burr Ridge, was convicted of one count of bribery conspiracy in a written ruling that was made public Friday by a federal judge following a stipulated bench trial.

Koll, 68, is scheduled to be sentenced Jan. 19, 2012, by U.S. District Judge Harry Leinenweber, who rendered a guilty verdict after Koll and the government provided agreed facts and legal arguments in writing. Koll faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The verdict was announced today by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Joseph Ferguson, Inspector General for the City of Chicago.

“This scheme involved a years-long abuse of official authority and violation of the public trust without regard for the potential consequences to public health. The IGO will continue work with our federal partners to rid Chicago of the corrupt elements that undermine the confidence of Chicagoans in the integrity of City government.” Inspector General Ferguson said.

According to court documents, between 1995 and 2007, Koll was authorized by the IDPH to teach state-mandated food sanitation courses and administer exams to individuals seeking certification as food service sanitation managers. A state-approved course requires 15 hours of training, including instruction regarding food borne illnesses, time/temperature relationships, personal hygiene, pest control and prevention of food contamination.

State law requires all food service establishments, such as restaurants, grocery stores, bakeries, convenience stores, schools and hospitals to have on site an individual holding a food service sanitation manager certificate based on successful completion of the course and exam. Through a reciprocity agreement between the City of Chicago and the state, an individual holding an Illinois certificate could obtain a Chicago food service sanitation manager certificate without taking a second exam by submitting a copy of the state certificate to the city along with a fee.

From at least June 2004 through June 2007, in exchange for cash bribes, Koll arranged to fraudulently obtain certificates for individuals who had not attended a course or passed the exam. She enabled them to obtain certificates by fraudulently completing answer sheets and submitting them to the IDPH on their behalf, knowing that they had not attended the course or taken the exam. Although Koll was an independent contractor for the State of Illinois, the judge’s verdict hinged on his finding that she was an agent of the state Department of Public Health when she accepted bribes.

Koll was initially charged in 2007 and her conviction followed several years of legal proceedings. At the time the case began, federal authorities said they had provided state officials with information about the unqualified individuals who received fraudulent state certificates.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michelle Nasser.

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