



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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2 businesses, 9 people indicted after agents conduct food stamp fraud investigation (Cleveland) – Two Cuyahoga County businesses and nine people were indicted earlier this week by the Cuyahoga County Grand Jury for their role in a food stamp fraud operation. The indictments are a result of an investigation by agents with the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Ohio Investigative Unit and detectives with the Parma Police Department.

Last fall, agents and detectives began investigating Sam & Son's Inc., also known as Sam's Beverage, 5239 State Road in Parma, after receiving complaints of food stamp trafficking. During the investigation, agents also began investigating R&M Cairo, LLC., also known as Rite Shop, 14053 Lorain Ave., in Cleveland. Search warrants were conducted at both locations in December 2013 and again at Sam's Beverage in June 2014.

Sam & Son's Inc., was indicted on 15 counts of illegal use of food stamps; two counts of possession of criminal tools; and one count each of money laundering and theft. R&M Cairo, LLC., was also indicted on eight counts of illegal use of food stamps; one count each of money laundering, theft, and operating a gambling house; and five counts of gambling.

Rizkalla Fanous, 31, of Cleveland, was indicted on 14 counts of illegal use of food stamps; and one count each of money laundering and theft. Michael Fanous, 32, also of Cleveland, was indicted on one count each of money laundering, theft and operating a gambling house; and five counts of gambling.

The grand jury also indicted Mena Fanuous, 29, Cleveland, on two counts of illegal use of food stamps; one count of money laundering; five counts of gambling; and one count each of theft and operating a gambling house.

Parma residents Marie Breedlove, 23; Dina Sisi, 39; Jamie Rubly, 21; and Cleveland residents Latrice Parish, 27; Pandora Otis, Jr., 26; and Tanna Hurd, 29 were all indicted on one count of illegal use of food stamps and one count of misdemeanor petty theft.

The liquor permits for both locations were also administratively cited. As with all cases, the administrative charges will be presented to the Ohio Liquor Control Commission once all criminal proceedings are completed. The commission has the authority to issue penalties such as fines, suspensions or revocation of the liquor permit.

If you have information about a retailer engaging in illegal food stamp activity, please notify the Ohio Investigative Unit by calling #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. Follow OIU on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Investigative-Unit/165782203506269> and on Twitter by logging onto http://twitter.com/Ohio_OIU.