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CONTACT: Gary Mack or Wes Bleed
[630-357-7552](tel:630-357-7552)

Village terminates contract with senior advocate amid charges *Elmwood Park resident among three persons charged in Medicare scheme*

ELMWOOD PARK – The Village has terminated its contract with Mary Talaga amid federal charges released by the U.S. Attorney’s office. Talaga, 53, of Elmwood Park, has been providing senior advocate services under a contract with the village for less than two months.

“We’re obviously very troubled by the allegations,” Village Manager Paul Volpe said. “Even though Ms. Talaga is not a village employee, we take the charges seriously and have already terminated our contract with her.”

The village recently entered into a service contract with Talaga to help seniors or families and individuals caring for the elderly to help navigate the variety of services that are available for seniors and to help them get the care they need. Her office was charged with linking seniors to service providers and social services.

Talaga was indicted along with two others in connection with an alleged Medicare fraud scheme. She is alleged to have billed Medicare for services that were not performed.

“We understand that an indictment contains merely charges and is not evidence of guilt,” Volpe said. “But we have to be proactive and take the necessary steps to protect our residents. Even though Ms. Talaga’s contract was brand new, we are taking steps to ensure that our seniors or their family members were not victimized in some way in the short time that she provided services.”

Further information on the senior advocate program will be posted on the Village’s website as it becomes available.

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