

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

MONTEREY WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO OBTAINING AIDE BY MEANS OF MISREPRESENTATION WITH IN THE COUNTY MONTEREY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Monterey County District Attorney Dean Flippo announced today that on August 1st, 2018, Desiree Cruz, age 33, resident of Monterey, plead guilty to a felony violation of receiving aide by misrepresentation. The plea was taken by Monterey County Superior Court Judge Andrew Liu.

Between the months of December 2012 and June 2017, Cruz was receiving both cash aide and food stamps claiming that the father of her child was an absent parent and that she needed these benefits to help support her son. A subsequent investigation by the Department of Social Services and the Monterey County District Attorney's Office revealed that in fact the father of Cruz's child was not an absent parent and had been living in her home and employed during the entire period of the fraud. This resulted in the household receiving income well above the income threshold level to receive any benefits. In addition, it was discovered that Cruz had misrepresented her household income on her eligibility status reports as well as to the Department of Social Services. Cruz's misrepresentation resulted in a total over payment of benefits of \$12,315.00.

Cruz will be sentenced by Judge Liu on September 9, 2018. She faces three years of formal felony probation, up to 365 days in jail, and will be ordered to pay back the over payment directly to the Department of Social Services.

The case was investigated by the Department of Social Services and District Attorney Investigator Kris Hunsaker.