

Willowbrook employees accused of bilking center

Three employees of the Staten Island Developmental Center yesterday surrendered themselves to police after being warned that they were under investigation for allegedly forging prescription slips to get paid sick days.

The scheme cost the center more than \$10,000, a spokesman for the Staten Island Crimes Against Property squad said. One of the employees, 26-year-old Donald Frank of 115 Stuyvesant Pl., St. George, a supervisor at the center, was also accused of stealing several thousand dollars worth of payroll checks from the center on April 1.

Police said Frank, James Wood, 22, of 600 Hylan Blvd., Grasmere, and Dorothy Watts, 41, of 130 Targee St., Stapleton, gave themselves up at the 120th Precinct stationhouse about 9 a.m. The arrests were the result of an investigation launched by detectives in January. A spokesman for the squad said the suspects were reached by phone yesterday and told they were under investigation.

The crimes began in November, according to police, when Ms. Watts stole a blank

prescription pad from Dr. Abraham Zerykier of New Dorp while visiting him as a legitimate patient. Because she had obtained a prescription from him, police said, she was able to forge his signature and use the phony prescription slips to get paid sick days.

She at first worked the scheme alone, police said, but later began selling the blank forms to other employees. Police are unsure how much money each slip was sold for. But police believe other employees were involved.

"Other arrests are imminent," said Detective Joseph Guido. "The investigation is not concluded."

The three suspects were arraigned in Stapleton Criminal Court following the arrests.

Detective Frank Marchionne made the arrests. Also involved in the investigation, in addition to Guido, were Detective Anthony Lotito and Sergeant Thomas Boyd.

Frank was paroled yesterday afternoon following his arraignment on grand larceny charges before Judge Louis Rosenthal in Stapleton Criminal Court. Woods and Ms. Watts were arraigned in Brooklyn Night Court.