

## Disgruntle Contractor Takes Advantage No More... Human Services Spotlight Series #19

In August 2016, a homeowner's association located in Pinellas County contracted with an individual advertising themselves to be a licensed and insured construction contractor, to install vinyl siding on four buildings located within the homeowner's association for a total of \$43,800. The individual provided records showing he was licensed and insured.

The Treasurer of the homeowner's association provided the individual with a down payment of \$17,250. The individual failed to provide any services, materials, or a refund.

In April of 2017, this same individual also contracted with another Pinellas County homeowner, again to install vinyl siding and French doors on the consumer's home for a total of \$8,100. The homeowner provided this individual with a down payment of \$3,240. The individual failed to return to the jobsite to do any work and failed to provide any materials.

It was discovered that this individual was using someone else's contractor's license number on his advertisements and business cards. The license number being used by this individual belonged to a contractor who alerted authorities that this individual was a former employee using his license without his permission and knowledge.

After realizing they had been taken advantage of, both the homeowner's association and the homeowner victimized by this individual, reported these incidents to Pinellas County Consumer Protection. The scope of the work contracted would have required the individual to hold a contractor's license which he did not have.

Due to a diligent and thorough criminal investigation conducted by Pinellas County Consumer Protection, multiple charges were filed by the State Attorney's Office including Unlicensed Contracting and Grand Theft. The individual was sentenced by the courts to five years of probation with the Florida Department of Corrections, pay multiple fees and fines and pay a combined total of \$20,065.36 in restitution to make the victim's whole.

## Protect Regulate Investigate Educate

Sometimes it is hard to spot fraud when it is happening. Scams can be large or small, sophisticated, or simple, but the people behind them have two things in common: They want to steal your money and avoid being caught. The reality is anyone could fall victim to a scam, no matter your age, intellect, or economic status. Most consumer transactions are completed satisfactorily. On occasion, however, any consumer could experience unresolved problems such as defective products, erroneous bills or non-delivery of goods or services.

When you are confronted with such a situation, the dedicated employees of Pinellas County Consumer Protection are here to assist you. Investigators are available to speak with you regarding a consumer transaction at (727) 464-6200.

[consumer@pinellascounty.org](mailto:consumer@pinellascounty.org)



## Doing Things for You!

For more information, visit us  
online at [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)