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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Authorities Arrest Eight in Statewide Business Fraud



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Polk County Sheriff's Office today announced the arrests of eight people working together in an intricate theft scheme that resulted in more than $100,000 in losses. The operation used a stolen business account of a custom home building company to purchase Visa/Mastercard gift cards and miscellaneous merchandise from Home Depot and Lowes. The ringleader of the group, Bobby Staley, conducted the operation from Liberty Correctional Institute in Liberty County. Other members of the group worked out of Jacksonville, Tampa, and Fort Lauderdale.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "The ringleader of this complex organized crime scheme spanned six judicial circuits in Florida orchestrated the fraud from prison depriving the victims of more than a hundred thousand dollars. Through great investigative work by Sheriff Grady Judd, the Polk County Sheriff's Office and my Office of Statewide Prosecution, the scheme has been shut down."

Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd said, "Bobby Staley has a shockingly long criminal career—he's an unrepentant thief and con man. He steals from others' hard work. He cannot be trusted outside of jail or prison and now we have clear evidence he can't be trusted in prison. With the charges he's racked up this time, it looks like he's earned another long stretch in state custody. Let's hope going forward, he's also earned close scrutiny from state prison officials so he can't continue to victimize innocent people while he's locked up."

According to the investigation, Staley made calls to banks from inside prison, claiming to be the owner of Tapia Construction in Polk County. Staley changed the mailing address of the construction company to new addresses in Jacksonville where five co-conspirators lived. Staley

then requested new credit cards to be linked to the construction company's business account. Staley also bragged to witnesses about smuggling cell phones into prison to assist in the scheme and recruited his daughter Adriana Staley to take part.

The Polk County Sheriff's Office first became aware of the scheme on Nov. 20, 2017 when Tapia Construction reported fraudulent activity on the company's Home Depot business account. The company reported more than $45,000 unlawful transactions of merchandise and gift cards from multiple cities across the state. The company also reported more than $47,000 of fraudulent transactions linked to the business's Lowes account. The investigation also revealed that the co-conspirators used the gift cards to purchase money orders to deposit into Staley's Department of Corrections inmate account, as well as personal bank accounts. The co-conspirators allegedly used aliases and fake driver licenses to purchase hundreds of brand gift cards and merchandise to purchase personal property, money orders and money wires.

Additional companies impacted by this scheme include two Clearwater companies, Yarborough Electric, with more than $11,900 in losses, and Fast of Florida, with more than $1,600 in losses. Nationwide companies affected include: Citibank, Home Depot, Lowe's and Synchrony Bank.

The following individuals are charged in this case:

· Christopher Coaxum, 34, Jacksonville;
· Katrina Cyrus, 33, Jacksonville;
· Curtis Harris, 28, Fort Lauderdale, currently resides in the Broward County Jail;
· Leonard Robinson III, 34, Jacksonville;
· Adriana Staley, 18, Jacksonville.
· Bobby Staley, 42, currently resides in the Broward County Jail;
· Ken Theogene, 36, Tampa; and
· Nahshon Williams, 35, Jacksonville.

The defendants face charges including racketeering violations, conspiracy to violate racketeering act, organized scheme to defraud more than $50,000, scheme to defraud a financial institution, cheating, grand theft, money laundering, possession of stolen credit cards and fraudulent use of credit cards.

Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Rita Peters will prosecute this matter.