

## **Press Release**

### **Former Florida Resident Sentenced to 20 Years in Federal Prison for Appraisal Fraud**

Thursday, July 2, 2026

#### **For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Florida

Tampa, FL – Armando Martinez (51, Plano, TX) has been sentenced by Chief U.S. District Judge Amos Mazzant, III, of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas to 20 years in federal prison for bank fraud. Martinez previously pleaded guilty. U.S. Attorney Gregory W. Kehoe made the announcement.

According to court documents filed with the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Martinez, who had his Florida Appraiser's license revoked, orchestrated and executed a bank fraud scheme directed at multiple financial institutions by taking over the identity and license number of a legitimate licensed appraiser. Martinez then purportedly conducted onsite appraisals for dozens of properties in Florida. In reality, Martinez paid others to go to the properties and take pictures for appraisals he completed. He then sent the appraisals to the victim lenders, using his computer after having fled the United States to the Dominican Republic. Based on the false and fraudulent appraisals, the financial institutions were fraudulently induced to approve and fund mortgage loans and pay Martinez appraisal fees. As a result of Martinez's appraisal fraud, more than \$65 million in mortgages are impaired or defective. These mortgages were either guaranteed by the Federal Housing Administration or purchased and guaranteed by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

On April 7, 2026, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. The core mission of the Fraud Division is to zealously investigate and prosecute those who steal or fraudulently misuse taxpayer dollars. Department of Justice efforts to combat fraud support President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

This case was investigated by the Federal Housing Finance Agency Office of Inspector General and the United States Department of Housing and Development – Office of Inspector General. It was prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Chris Poor.

*Updated July 2, 2026*