




Memorandum



Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General
A State of Florida Commission on Law Enforcement Accredited Agency
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To: The Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor, Miami Dade County
The Honorable Audrey M. Edmonson, Chairwoman
and Members, Board of County Commissioners, Miami Dade County

From: Mary T. Cagle, Inspector General 

Date: November 21, 2019

Subject: Defendant Pleads Guilty to Bribery in Connection with a County Funded Low-Income Apartment Building, Ref. 18-0010-I

On November 18, 2019, Daisy Recalde, the former property manager of the Royal Palms Apartments (Royal Palms) in Opa-Locka, Florida, pled guilty in federal court to one count of Bribery for requiring a \$1,000 payment from a low-income resident seeking to be reinstated to the Royal Palms' waiting list.

The Royal Palms, owned and operated by the Peninsula Housing Development, Inc. XVI (Peninsula), was built with the aid of a \$500,000 Miami-Dade County allocated HOME Program loan, in addition to other direct federal funding. HOME Program funds are especially targeted for low and very low-income individuals. The County loan to Peninsula, made in 2005, required Peninsula (among other building requirements, such as number of units, size, etc.) to maintain very low monthly rents (pursuant to a formula) and annually provide the County with an occupancy report. The majority of tenants at the Royal Palms Apartments are Section 8 housing voucher recipients. Pursuant to the loan agreement, these conditions would be in effect for 30 years after the date that the project was completed.

In May 2018, a victim reported to the OIG that Ms. Recalde was attempting to extort her to be reinstated on the Royal Palms' waitlist, in exchange for a \$1,000 bribe. In a partnered undercover operation between the Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) OIG, in a controlled setting, the victim paid Ms. Recalde the \$1,000 bribe and was given the keys to an apartment. Ms. Recalde was charged on August 24, 2019 and surrendered to the U.S. Marshals Service on September 24, 2019. Her plea on Monday to 18 U.S.C. § 666(a)(1), *Bribery Concerning Programs Receiving Federal Funds*, resulted in a sentence to two years probation, 100 hours of community service, a \$100 fine and restitution of \$1,000.

The OIG appreciates our partnership with the HUD OIG and the U.S. Attorney's Office, and we would like to thank the Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development Department for their assistance in this investigation.

cc: Alex Ferro, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Maurice Kemp, Deputy Mayor
Michael Liu, Director, Public Housing and Community Development Department
Cathy Jackson, Director, Audit and Management Services Department
Yinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor