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For Immediate Release
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DISBARRED LAWYER SENTENCED TO 1 TO 3 YEARS IN PRISON, REQUIRED TO PAY \$791,831 IN RESTITUTION FOR DEFRAUDING ELDERLY VICTIMS

Defendant Pleaded Guilty To Stealing \$277,000 From Riverdale Couple in Property Sale

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that a disbarred Bronx attorney has been sentenced to one to three years in prison for stealing from an elderly couple who put their trust in his hands in a real estate transaction and ordered to pay nearly \$800,000 to other victims and charities that were defrauded.

District Attorney Clark said, “The defendant preyed upon elderly clients in Riverdale and stole profits from selling their house. His actions amounted to elder abuse and led to grievous financial harm and mental anguish. He has pleaded guilty and now faces the consequences for his actions, including prison time and repaying the money he stole.”

District Attorney Clark said the defendant, Paul Friery, 71, of Shendaken, NY, who maintained a law office on Riverdale Avenue, was sentenced today to one to three years in prison on one count of second-degree Grand Larceny by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Tara Collins. He pleaded guilty to that charge on June 20, 2024. Civil orders of restitution totaling \$791,831 were imposed, with the money to go to a victim, the estates of two deceased victims, and nine charities.

According to the investigation, between July 2014 to January 2021 the defendant took thousands of dollars from the elderly victims in retainer fees to represent them in their real estate closing, and allegedly never dispersed money owed to them when he received money from buyers. Friery was disbarred from the practice of law in October, 2020 following the Attorney Grievance Committee’s investigation into predatory practices by him while acting as an attorney.

In the incident, Friery represented buyers of a home owned by a couple in their 90s. He gave the couple about \$329,000 but kept more than \$277,000. They passed away after trying for years to no avail to get the rest of the money owed to them.



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The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Samantha Sizemore of the Financial Frauds Bureau under the supervision of Eugene Bykov, Supervisor of the Financial Frauds Bureau, Michelle Milanes, Deputy Chief of the Financial Frauds Bureau, and Herman Wun, Chief of the Financial Frauds Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Denise Kodjo, Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division, and Wanda Perez-Maldonado, Chief of the Investigations Division.

District Attorney Clark thanked Trial Preparation Assistant Cindy Murillo and Principal Account Investigator Lorraine Ciechanowicz of the Financial Frauds Bureau, Lieutenant Vincent Cantarella of BXDA Detective Investigators and Senior BXDA Detective Investigators Brendan Sullivan and Hugh Higgins for their work on the case.

District Attorney Clark thanked NY State Police Senior Investigator John Bode, and Investigators Israel Vazquez, Blake Hasbrouch, and Joseph Temple of Troop F. She also thanked NYPD Sergeant Christopher Nagel who referred this case to the Bronx District Attorney's Office.