



John A. Carey
Inspector General

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL PALM BEACH COUNTY



Inspector General
Accredited

"Enhancing Public Trust in Government"

**Redacted per §119.071 (5)(b) and (5)(f) 1 F.S., 15 U.S.C
§9058a (4)(a)**

Investigative Report

2025-0002

False Information on Palm Beach County Rental Assistance Applications – Belle Glade

February 9, 2026



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INVESTIGATIVE REPORT 2025-0002

FEBRUARY 9, 2026



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FALSE INFORMATION ON PALM BEACH COUNTY RENTAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS – BELLE GLADE

SUMMARY

WHAT WE DID

The Palm Beach County (County) Office of Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint from the Palm Beach County Community Services Department (Community Services) concerning [REDACTED] (Applicant)'s applications to the County Emergency Rental and Utilities Assistant (ERA) Program. One of the homeowners of the residential location listed on Applicant's applications contacted the Property Appraiser's Office to dispute a lien placed on the property relating to a claimed homestead exemption.¹ The homeowner reportedly told the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser's Office that she did not sign a lease with anyone and did not receive County rental assistance funds for a tenant.

Community Services told the OIG the applicant submitted altered documents with his application that resulted in

Applicant's application being approved for \$7,400 in assistance from the County. Additionally, Community Services denied a second application after discovering inconsistencies within the application. Community Services also reported that Applicant received assistance from the OUR Florida program.²

Based upon our initial review of Applicant's applications and accompanying documents, the OIG initiated an investigation of the following allegation:

Allegation (1): Applicant submitted false information to the County in support of his assistance applications, which resulted in improper grant funding from a County program.

Our office reviewed rental assistance applications, supporting documents, and the program guidelines. We interviewed individuals with knowledge of the information contained in documents

¹ Under section 196.161, Florida Statutes, the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser may place a tax lien on property after determining that the owner improperly claimed a homestead exemption while simultaneously using the residence as a rental, which violates Florida's homestead eligibility requirements. The lien reflects the back taxes owed, along with statutory penalties and interest for the period in which the improper exemption was claimed.

² Applicant received \$14,850.00 in rental assistance from the OUR Florida program for October 2021 through January 2022 and March through May 2022, which preceded the period covered by the assistance applications identified in this report. Applicant reported on his approved application 170825 that he had received subsidy or assistance for rental or utilities from the OUR Florida Program. OUR Florida was a federally funded program offering rental and utility assistance to qualified individuals, families, and businesses. Until May of 2022, OUR Florida funding was distributed through the State of Florida Department of Children.

submitted in support of Applicant's rental assistance applications, and interviewed his purported landlord, [REDACTED] (Landlord).

WHAT WE FOUND

Allegation (1) is supported. We found that Applicant, in concert with Landlord, submitted false applications to the County. As a result of Applicant and Landlord's actions, the County approved one application and issued a check totaling \$7,400.00 to Landlord for Applicant's rental assistance, which she split with Applicant. We find this amount to be identified cost.³

We found sufficient information to warrant referring our findings to law enforcement (with a notification copy to the State Attorney's Office) for a determination of whether the facts arise to a criminal act under section 817.03, Florida Statutes.

We also found sufficient information to warrant referral of our findings the United States Attorney's Office for a determination of whether they constitute a violation of Title 18, Chapter 47, Section 1001, United States Criminal Code.

WHAT WE RECOMMEND

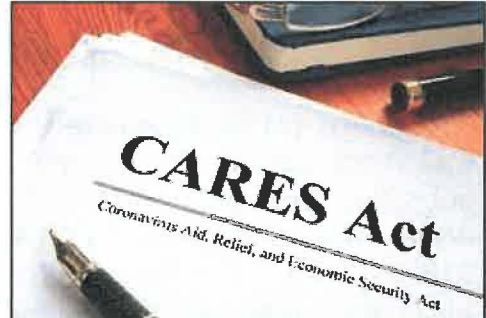
We make one recommendation; that the County seek reimbursement of \$7,400.00 in issued funds.

³ Identified costs are costs that have been identified as dollars that have the potential of being returned to the entity to offset the taxpayers' burden.

BACKGROUND

The CARES Act

On March 1, 2020, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis directed the State Health Officer to issue a public health emergency in the State of Florida due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 13, 2020, then-Palm Beach County Mayor Dave Kerner declared a state of emergency in the County due to COVID-19.



On March 27, 2020, the President signed the CARES Act into law. The CARES Act allocated \$2.2 trillion in economic relief to individuals, businesses, and governments affected by COVID-19. State governments were allocated a total of \$139 billion based on their populations (as measured by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2019), with no state receiving less than \$1.25 billion. Florida received a total of \$8.328 billion, with \$261,174,832 of that total provided to Palm Beach County.

On May 15, 2020, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners dedicated \$40 million of the approximately \$261 million allocated to it for "Emergency Mortgage, Rental and Utility Assistance." Community Services administrated the Rental Assistance portion of this funding.

CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund Rental, Utilities, and Food Assistance Program Guidelines

The CARES Act- Coronavirus Relief Fund Rental, Utilities, and Food Assistance Program was designed to utilize CARES Act funds to provide one-time rental and utility assistance to eligible County residents who experienced loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Community Services website explained that in order to be eligible for the program, the applicant must reside within the corporate limits of Palm Beach County and have documentable information to evidence loss of income, reduction in hours, or unemployment because of the COVID-19 pandemic that contributed to missed rental payments and/or utility payments. Eligibility guidelines on the website also listed the income and asset requirements to qualify for the program. Assistance was provided for past due rent and/or utilities due from March 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

Emergency Rental Assistance Program

On March 9, 2021, under the authority of the U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program 1 (as established by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021) and 2 (as established by section 3201 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021), the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved ERA-1

funding to assist Palm Beach County residents affected by COVID-19 with rental and utility assistance. On August 17, 2021, the BCC approved ERA-2 funding for the same purpose.

Eligible Palm Beach County households are renter households in which one or more individual(s) meets all of the following criteria:

- For ERA-1, qualifies for unemployment or experienced a reduction of household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardships **due to** COVID-19 (either directly or indirectly), or for ERA-2, qualifies for unemployment or experienced other financial hardships **during or due to** (either directly or indirectly) COVID-19;
- Demonstrates a risk of homelessness or housing instability; and
- Has a household income at or below 80% of the area median.

Assistance Applications

The County accepted online applications electronically on the Community Services Online System for Community Access to Resources and Social Services (OSCARSS). OSCARSS required applicants to upload certain supporting documentation, including identification, a rental lease agreement, and a Balance Statement from the landlord. The Balance Statement was to be completed by the applicant's landlord or property manager, and was to reflect the amount of rent owed by the applicant.



The form of the application differed slightly throughout the program, but each included eligibility questions and acknowledgements. Applicants were required to affirm these statements by digitally checking a box next to each one.

The acknowledgment section for applications during the period relevant to this report included the following:

- I further certify that I have read the above information and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information is accurate and has been properly recorded. Additionally, I understand that I am responsible for the accuracy of the information provided and that said information will be used as a basis for determining my eligibility for services. **I also understand that any falsification or misrepresentation of this information is just cause for denial of services and prosecution for fraud.** [Emphasis added]

The final page of the application required the applicant's name and submission date.

Community Services assigned applications it received to a Community Services reviewer. The reviewer checked to ensure the application submitted included all required

information and that there were no discrepancies within the documents. If information was missing, or if information in submitted documents was inconsistent, the reviewer would return the application to the applicant, noting what was missing or inconsistent. Returning an application removed the checks in the boxes next to the acknowledgements and removed the name from the signature line. The applicant had to re-check the acknowledgements and re-type the name on the signature line before re-submitting it with all required information. If the applicant met the income guidelines, submitted required documentation, and the applicant's landlord had registered or was in the process of registering with the County as a vendor, the reviewer would send the application to a supervisor for review.

Then, applications were sent to Community Services fiscal personnel. Upon the approval of an application for rental assistance, the County sent notice of approval and a request for payment to the County Clerk & Comptroller's Office for payment processing.

The County Clerk and Comptroller's Office paid rental assistance funds directly to the applicant's landlord. In order to be paid, the landlord had to register as a vendor with the County. If not already registered, the County sent the landlord a link to a portal to complete the vendor registration process.

Property Appraiser's Records for [REDACTED]

Applicant's assistance applications listed his residential address as [REDACTED]. The Palm Beach County Property Appraiser's website and the Palm Beach County Official Property show Landlord and Landlord's daughter have owned the property since July 28, 2014.

ALLEGATIONS AND FINDINGS

Allegation (1):

Applicant submitted false information to the County in support of his assistance applications, which resulted in improper grant funding from a County program.

Governing Directives:

Palm Beach County Emergency Rental Assistance Program application and guidelines.

Finding:

The information obtained **supports** the allegation.

Rental Assistance Application 170825

County records show on December 15, 2022, assistance application 170825 was electronically signed with the name Applicant and submitted to the County, seeking rental assistance for a residential address [REDACTED].

Personal Details	
First Name:	[REDACTED]
Middle Initial:	[REDACTED]
Last Name:	[REDACTED]
Date of Birth:	[REDACTED]
Gender:	[REDACTED]
SSN(Nine Digits):	[REDACTED]
Email Address:	[REDACTED]
Primary Contact Phone:	[REDACTED]

Residential Address	
Address:	[REDACTED]
City:	BELLE GLADE
Apt/Unit:	[REDACTED]
Unit No:	[REDACTED]
Bldg/Firm:	[REDACTED]
State:	FL
ZIP Code:	33430

The application requested \$5,550 in past due rent and late fees for October 2022 to March 2023. The application listed Landlord as the landlord and [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430 as the Landlord's address. The Landlord's email address was listed as [REDACTED] with a listed phone number of [REDACTED]

Additional Questions - Rental Assistance	
What is the Rent Due Date?	[REDACTED]
What is your Landlord's Name?	[REDACTED]
What is your Landlord's Address?	[REDACTED]
What is your Landlord's Email Address?	[REDACTED]
What is your Landlord's Phone Number?	[REDACTED]
What is your Monthly Rent Amount?	\$1,800.00
Are you currently receiving section 8 or any federal housing subsidies?	No
Did you receive a Rental Late or Eviction Notice?	Yes
Have you received an eviction notice (issued after 3/15/2020) caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?	No
What is the Rental Months Requested?	03/2023,02/2023,01/2023,12/2022,11/2022,10/2022
What is the Rental Past Due Start Date?	[REDACTED]
What is the Rental Past Due End Date?	03/2023,02/2023,01/2023,12/2022,11/2022,10/2022
What is the Rental Past Due Amount Requested?	\$5,400.00

Additional Questions - Rental Assistance	
What is the Rental Late Fees Amount Requested? *	\$150.00
What is the Rental Total Amount Requested? *	\$5,550.00
How many Bedrooms are in your Home? *	3
Is your crisis caused by Rent Increase? *	No
If you answered Yes, how much is the monthly increase? *	\$0.00

The Declaration of Crisis section stated, "I lost my job so I am receiving unemployment."

Declaration of Crisis (Please Explain the reason for your Crisis Situation below): *
I lost my job so I am receiving unemployment.

The County communicated with the applicant via email [REDACTED] and returned the application on December 29, 2022, advising:

Per our conversation i return the application to you, please upload your updated lease page 1,2,3 and signature page, upload a utility bill under proof of residency. Upload your DEO under proof of NON-COVID crisis. Thanks

The Applicant resubmitted the application that same day. On January 10, 2023, Community Services created and sent a link to the Balance Statement to the Landlord listed on Applicant's application, at [REDACTED]. The Balance Statement was returned to the County on January 12, 2023.

On January 20, 2023, the County denied the application for the reason "Needs Homestead Confirmation" and "property is homesteaded, please verify "[landlord] lives elsewhere." The County returned the application again on January 21, 2023 with the reason, "Needs Homestead Confirmation: Please verify that the homeowner lives elsewhere. Please kindly submit documented proof." On January 24, 2023, the reviewer noted, "I spoke with the landlord today Tuesday January 24, 2023 at 3:30 pm and request a proof of residency from her."

Ultimately, the application was accepted and processed.

Residential Lease Agreement and Deposit Receipt Submitted with Application 170825

The Residential Lease and Deposit Receipt Agreement submitted in support of application 170825 details a Residential Lease Rental Agreement and Deposit Receipt for [REDACTED]. The monthly rental amount was \$1,800,

and if applicable \$100 additional rent for each permitted person, for the period of June 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023. According to the lease,

LATE CHARGE: all unpaid rent balances after the 3rd day of each month shall incur a late charge of 5% (FIVE PERCENT) and shall be due and payable on the 3rd of each month and deemed additional rent. All unpaid rent balances after the 15th of each month shall incur an additional \$5 per day late charge, no more than fifty dollars (\$50.00).

RESIDENTIAL LEASE RENTAL AGREEMENT AND DEPOSIT RECEIPT

Received from [REDACTED] hereinafter referred to as Tenant(s), the sum of \$3700.00 dollars, evidenced by, Manager/Landlord [REDACTED] signature, as a deposit which, upon acceptance of this Lease-Rental Agreement, Manager hereinafter referred to as Landlord, shall apply said deposit as follows:

June Rent: \$1800.00
 Security Deposit: \$1800.00
 Application Fee: \$100.00
 Total: \$3700.00
 Property Address: [REDACTED]

Base monthly Rent Charge \$1800.00 and if applicable \$100.00 additional rent for each permitted Person above 4.

1. This AGREEMENT including attached [REDACTED] to be parties certificate of inspection, damage repair and cleaning charges schedule, between Landlord [REDACTED] (tenants), each signatory individually and severally responsible for the total term of this agreement, whether or not in actual possession of the premises.

2. **DESCRIPTION:** Landlord leases to Tenant(s) the house described as [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430 and including shed house and land described as [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430.

3. **TERM:** This Lease shall begin at 12:01 noon 06/01/22, 0 days pro-rated through the last day of the month ending 12:01 noon 05/31/23 At which time the Lease terminates without further notice. Any holding over thereafter shall be charged double rent as per F.S. 83.58. Subject to provision of paragraph 28 and attached Amendment.

4. **OCCUPANCY:** Premises shall be occupied only by the following person(s) [REDACTED]. Guests staying over (15) days will be considered to be in violation of this provision. Tenant(s) shall not use or permit the premises to be used for any illegal, immoral or improper purpose and shall not make or permit to be made any disturbance detrimental to the premises or peaceful occupancy by nearby inhabitants. Tenant(s) shall not assign this agreement or sublet any portion of the premises without prior written consent of the landlord which may not be unreasonably withheld.

5. **PETS:** shall not be permitted on the premises, if exception is given on selected Units, shall be revocable by Landlord at any time for good cause. Tenant(s) shall not allowed their permitted pet to dirty up Lawn and common areas, to protect the peaceful enjoyment and safety of the other Tenants and maintenance personnel. This charge is NOT APPORTIONABLE in the event the animal is removed during the lease term.

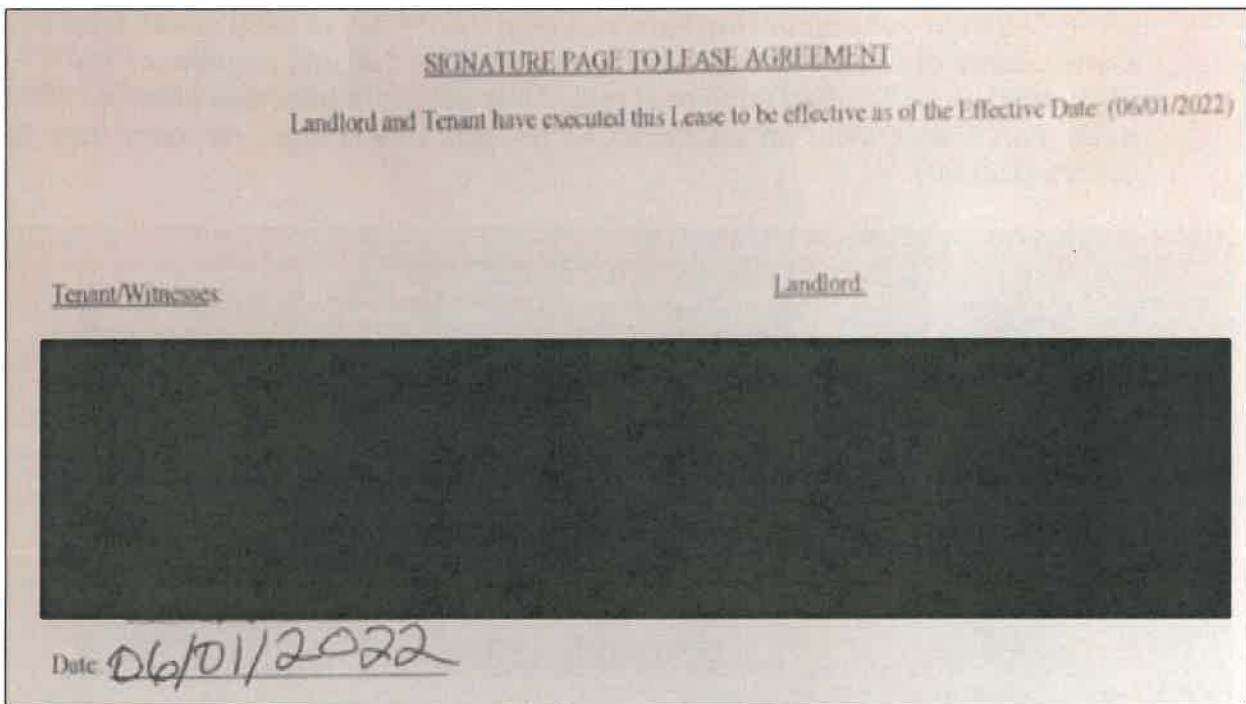
6. **POSSESSION:** The parties agree that If landlord is unable to give possession of the Premises on the date of the commencement of the term, because the occupant refuses to give up possession, or any other reason, Landlord shall not be liable for any damage caused thereby, nor shall this agreement be void or voidable, but Tenant shall not be liable for any rent until Possession is delivered. Tenant may terminate this Agreement if possession is not delivered within thirty days of the commencement of the term thereof. The termination date of the Lease shall not be extended.

7. **KEYS:** no keys shall be added or changed without Landlord's written permission to secure his access in the event of fire or other emergency. [REDACTED] Tenant(s) acknowledges receipt of 2 residence keys numbered 166 and a shed house key. There shall be a \$25.00 charge for each key and a \$45.00 charge for a shed house key not returned at expiration of lease.

8. **RENT:** The Tenants agree to pay the total rental for the term created by this Agreement shall be the sum of \$21,600.00 payable without any deduction or prior notice in monthly installments in advance on the first of each month in the amount of \$1800.00. Said subsequent payment shall be mailed to or paid in person at [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430 and marked with tenant name.

9. **LATE CHARGE:** all unpaid rent balances after the 3rd day of each month shall incur a late charge of 5% (FIVE PERCENT) and shall be due and payable on the 3rd of each month and deemed additional rent. All unpaid rent balances after the 15th of each month shall incur an additional \$5 per day late charge, no more than fifty dollars (\$50.00). All payments shall be applied to the oldest balances first.

The lease was purportedly signed by Applicant, as tenant, by Landlord, and by Landlord's daughter, as a witness, on June 1, 2022.



Balance Statement for Application 170825

The landlord Balance Statement lists Applicant as the tenant and shows an electronic signature for Landlord. The Balance Statement says the rent due plus late fees totaled \$7,400 for Oct 2022 to January 2023, and included a certification by the listed landlord that:

- ✓ I **certify** the above **information is true and correct** and I am authorized to collect rental payments on this property.
- ✓ I certify that the months requested by my tenant are past due and I have not received rents for the month's [sic] listed on this request and/or any future month's rent requested by my tenant will be applied towards the tenant's account.
[Emphasis added]

	Month	Rent Due	Late Fee	Legal Fee	Total Due
Month 1	October 2022	\$1,800.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$1,850.00
Month 2	November 2022	\$1,800.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$1,850.00
Month 3	December 2022	\$1,800.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$1,850.00
Month 4	January 2023	\$1,800.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$1,850.00
Grand Total:					\$7,400.00

Tenants Name: [REDACTED]

Tenants Address: BELLE GLADE
FL 33430

Vendor Code: [REDACTED]

Vendor Name: [REDACTED]

Vendor DBA: [REDACTED]

Vendor Address: Belle Glade
FL 33430-3282

☒ I certify that the above information is true and correct and I am authorized to collect rental payments on this property.

☒ I certify that the months requested by my tenant are past due and I have not received rents for the month's listed on this request and/or any future month's rent requested by my tenant will be applied towards the tenant's account

☒ I certify that I will return any Future Rent paid on my Tenant's behalf to Palm Beach County if they vacate my property prior to any Future Rent collected as stated in this Balance Statement.

☒ I certify that the mailing address is correct.

☒ (Optional) I understand that by signing and submitting this balance statement I am agreeing to accept funds on behalf of the tenant for the property listed above and that in doing so, tenant may remain on the property and no steps will be taken to evict the tenant for the period covered by this rental assistance, whether the received check is cashed or not.

☒ I certify that the tenant and I (the Landlord) are in agreement on lease status.





Electronically Signed By

01/12/2023

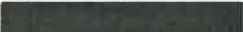
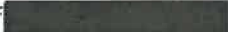

Date

Palm Beach County Vendor Registration

Prior to the approval of an application, a landlord must register with the County as a vendor to enable payment of rental assistance. Landlord is registered with the County as a vendor under the address [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430, phone number of [REDACTED] and email address [REDACTED]. However, the address for her property is listed as [REDACTED].

		Vendor Information	
Vendor ID:			
Legal Business Name:			
Address(es):			
Email(s):			
Alias/DBA:			
Contact(s):			
WebSite:			
Commodity / Services			
97164	Residential Space Rental or Lease		

FPL Statements

An FPL electric bill statement in the name of Applicant with a statement date of December 5, 2022, was submitted with application 170825. The bill reflected a service address of  Belle Glade, FL 33430 with an account number of 37793-47479 and a mailing address of  Belle Glade, FL 33430-6372. This PO Box address corresponded with the mailing address listed for owners of  Belle Glade-- Landlord and Landlord's daughter-- on the PBC Property Appraiser's website and the Special Warranty Deed recorded in Palm Beach County Official Property Records.

FPL

FPL.com Page 1 E001

Electric Bill Statement
 For: Nov 3, 2022 to Dec 5, 2022 (32 days)
 Statement Date: Dec 5, 2022
 Account Number: 37793-47479
 Service Address: [REDACTED]

Hello [REDACTED]
 Here's what you owe for this billing period.

CURRENT BILL

\$903.67
 TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE

Jan 5, 2023
 NEW CHARGES DUE BY

ENERGY USAGE HISTORY

BILL SUMMARY

Amount of your last bill	1,405.77
Payments received	-945.65
Balance before new charges	460.12
Total new charges	443.55
Total amount you owe	\$903.67

(See page 2 for bill details.)

KEEP IN MIND

Payments received after January 05, 2023 are considered late; a late payment charge, the greater of \$5.00 or 1.5% of your past due balance will apply. Your account may also be billed a deposit adjustment.
 * Third-party products and services (TPPS) are not regulated by the Florida Public Service Commission and not provided by FPL. Non-payment of TPPS fees will not result in disconnection of your FPL electrical service. For third-party program questions, contact the number shown. For FPL billing concerns, contact FPL.

The Florida Public Service Commission is reviewing proposed rates that would take effect on Jan. 1, 2023. Learn more at FPL.com/Rates.

Customer Service: 1-800-226-5865
 Outside Florida: 1-800-226-3545

Report Power Outages: 1-800-4OUTAGE (466-6243)
 Hearing/Speech Impaired: 711 (Relay Service)

FPL

/ 27 46012 42033779347479 7630900000

The amount enclosed includes the following donation:
 FPL Care To Share: _____

Make checks payable to FPL in U.S. funds and mail along with this coupon to:

FPL
 GENERAL MAIL FACILITY
 MIAMI FL 33188-0001

BELLE GLADE FL 33430-6372

Visit FPL.com/PayBill for ways to pay

37793-47479	\$903.67	Jan 5, 2023	\$
ACCOUNT NUMBER	TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE	NEW CHARGES DUE BY	AMOUNT ENCLOSED

FPL provided the OIG with documentation showing the actual billing history for [REDACTED] in Belle Glade for November and December 2022. This billing history shows that the account was not in the name of Applicant as reflected on the FPL bill submitted with application 170825; instead the account was in the name of Landlord's daughter.

BIHI	BILLING HISTORY					10/23/25 10:06:43				
7479 42 03 722 ELE ACT		10/07/14 1/044/ ACD4640								
BELLE GLADE		FL 33430 M				PAGE 3 OF 5				
CC N (Y/N)		RQST BY								
S	SVC DT	RM	DYS	T	S	BILL KWH	KWD	ELE AMT	BB AMT	TOT BILL AMT
-	05/04/23	5	29	A	B	2613	0	437.69	0.00	950.37
-	04/05/23	4	30	A	B	2981	0	515.04	0.00	1,065.12
-	03/06/23	3	31	A	B	2659	0	412.12	0.00	479.35
-	02/03/23	2	29	A	B	2145	0	330.24	0.00	791.42
	01/05/23	1	31	A	B	2139	0	318.82	0.00	833.12
	12/05/22	12	32	A	B	2569	0	372.82	0.00	903.67
-	11/03/22	11	29	A	B	2647	0	384.52	0.00	1,405.77
-	10/05/22	10	29	A	B	2870	0	418.74	0.00	1,146.65
-	09/06/22	9	33	A	B	3991	0	587.06	0.00	1,027.18
-	08/04/22	8	29	A	B	3433	0	503.27	0.00	1,184.39

In addition to the FPL statement in the name of Applicant, an FPL statement in the Landlord's name was submitted to support Applicant's application. This statement, dated December 25, 2022, had a listed service address of [REDACTED], Belle Glade, FL 33430 with an account number of 37793-67760. The service addressed for the FPL bill in Landlord's name corresponded to the address for Landlord in Applicant's application, the vendor registration, and the landlord Balance Statement.

FPL

FPL.com Page 1 E001

Electric Bill Statement
For: Nov 23, 2022 to Dec 25, 2022 (32 days)
Statement Date: Dec 25, 2022
Account Number: 37793-67760
Service Address:

Hello [REDACTED]
Here's what you owe for this billing period.

CURRENT BILL

\$180.73
TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE
Jan 25, 2023
NEW CHARGES DUE BY

BILL SUMMARY

Amount of your last bill	281.15
Payments received	-180.13
Balance before new charges	92.02
Total new charges	55.71
Total amount you owe	\$180.73

(See page 2 for bill details.)

The Florida Public Service Commission is reviewing proposed rates that would take effect on Jan. 1, 2023. Learn more at FPL.com/Rates.

ENERGY USAGE HISTORY

KEEP IN MIND

Payments received after January 25, 2023 are considered late; a late payment charge, the greater of \$5.00 or 1.5% of your past due balance will apply. Your account may also be billed a deposit adjustment.

* Third-party products and services (TPPS) are not regulated by the Florida Public Service Commission and not provided by FPL. Non-payment of TPPS fees will not result in disconnection of your FPL electrical service. For third-party program questions, contact the number shown. For FPL billing concerns, contact FPL.

Customer Service: 1-800-226-5555
Outside Florida: 1-800-226-3545

Report Power Outages:
Hearing/Speech Impaired: 1-800-4OUTAGE (468-8243)
711 (Relay Service)

FPL

27 46012 42033779367760 7630900000

The amount enclosed includes the following donation:
FPL Care To Share: _____

More check payable to FPL in U.S. funds and mail along with this coupon to:

FPL GENERAL MAIL FACILITY
MIAMI FL 33168-0001

Visit FPL.com/PayBill for ways to pay.

37793-67760 ACCOUNT NUMBER

\$180.73 TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE

Jan 25, 2023 NEW CHARGES DUE BY

\$ AMOUNT ENCLOSED

Funds Issued by the County to Landlord for Application 170825

On January 30, 2023, the County made a payment in the amount of \$7,400 via check number 000000003320582 solely to Landlord for the payment of rental assistance for Applicant's application 170825. The back of the check has a handwritten endorsement for Landlord.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PALM BEACH COUNTY
WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

CHECK NO. 00003320582
DATE 01/30/2023
AMOUNT \$*****7,400.00

PAY TO THE ORDER OF **Seven Thousand Four Hundred And 00/100 Dollars**

THIS DOCUMENT IS PRINTED IN TWO COLORS. DO NOT ACCEPT UNLESS BLUE AND BLACK ARE PRESENT. PADLOCK LIST SECURITY FEATURES ON BACK.

1512616

DO NOT SIGN, STAMP OR SIGN BELOW THIS LINE

Declaration of Crisis (Please Explain the reason for your Crisis Situation below):

I lost my job so I am receiving unemployment.

Second Rental Assistant Application 183202

County records show on March 16, 2023, Applicant initially electronically signed and submitted assistance application 183202 to the County, with a residential address of [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430.

According to the Declaration of Crisis, the Applicant "lost (sic) my job so I am receiving unemployment."

Declaration of Crisis (Please Explain the reason for your Crisis Situation below):

I lost my job so I am receiving unemployment.

The County returned the application on March 21, 2023, via email address [REDACTED] advising:

Please upload the following Documents:

Documents for Applicant:

Income for all adults 18 and older living in the household (Upload full recent view of DEO payment history.)

And

Please note that your ERA OSCARSS application # 183202 has been returned to you for updating.

Application has been Returned for below Reason:

Docuemnt(s) [sic] Needed

The Applicant resubmitted the application the following day. On March 23, 2023, the application was returned to the applicant for the same reasons. That same day, the application was resubmitted.

On March 24, 2023, the reviewer "created and sent Balance Statement link to landlord." The landlord Balance Statement was submitted to the County on March 27, 2023. On April 13, 2023, the County denied the application. The reasons for denial state, "Ineligible Documents" and "invalid proof of residency..."

The supporting documents submitted with the application included an FPL statement dated March 5, 2023 in Applicant's name for service at the rental address [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL. The bill showed a mailing address of [REDACTED] Belle Glade, FL 33430-6372.

FPL **FPL.com Page 1** **E001**

Electric Bill Statement
 For: Jan 3, 2023 to Feb 5, 2023 (32 days)
 Statement Date: Mar 5, 2023 Account Number: 37793-47479 Service Address: [REDACTED]

Hello [REDACTED]
 Here's what you owe for this billing period.

CURRENT BILL

\$213.67
 TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE

Mar 5, 2023
 NEW CHARGE DUE BY

ENERGY USAGE HISTORY

4,000 kWh
3,520 kWh
3,040 kWh
2,560 kWh
2,080 kWh
1,600 kWh
1,120 kWh
640 kWh
160 kWh
0 kWh

2022 J F M A M J J A S O N D 2022

BILL SUMMARY

Amount of your last bill	903.67
Payments received	-690.00
Balance before new charges	460.12
Total new charges	377.62
Total amount you owe	\$213.67

(See page 2 for bill details.)

The Florida Public Service Commission is reviewing proposed rates that would take effect on Jan. 1, 2023. Learn more at [FPL.com/Rates](https://www.fpl.com/Rates).

Customer Service: 1-800-226-5865
 Outside Florida: 1-800-226-3545

Report Power Outages: 1-800-4-OUTAGE (468-8243)
 Hearing/Speech Impaired: 711 (Relay Service)

FPL / 27 46012 42033779347479 7630900000

The amount enclosed includes the following donation:
 FPL Cares To Share: [REDACTED]

Make check payable to FPL in U.S. funds and mail along with this coupon to:

**FPL GENERAL MAIL FACILITY
 MIAMI FL 33188-0001**

BEVERLY GLADE FL 33430-6372

Visit [FPL.com/PayBill](https://www.fpl.com/PayBill) for ways to pay

37793-47479 ACCOUNT NUMBER	\$213.67 TOTAL AMOUNT YOU OWE	Mar 5, 2023 NEW CHARGE DUE BY	\$ AMOUNT ENCLOSED
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Police Report

On August 19, 2024, Landlord's daughter made a report to Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office. According to the police report, Landlord's daughter reported she "never rented out the property..." Landlord's daughter went to the tax collector's office and saw "a lease agreement which she did not authorize but it has here (sic) name in the signature place." Landlord's daughter told the officer that the signature was not her signature.

PALM BEACH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE		PAGE 1
CASE NO. 24090891	OFFENSE REPORT	CASE NO. 24090891
DISPOSITION: EULU		
DIVISION: ROAD PATROL		
911:		
CIVIL MATTER		
SIGNAL CODE: 66	CRIME CODE: 1	NON CRIME CODE: CC CODE: 9566 DATE: 08/19/24 MONDAY
ZONE: G12 GRID: B012	DEPUTY I.D.: 22088 NAME: LAMONARD DARRYL ASSIST:	TIME D 1526 A 1532 C 1628
OCCURRED BETWEEN DATE: 01/01/23, 0000 HOURS AND DATE: 08/19/24, 1526 HOURS		
EXCEPTION TYPE:		
INCIDENT LOCATION:		
CITY: BELLE GLADE	STATE: FL	ZIP: 33430
NO. OFFENSES: 00 NO. OFFENDERS: UK NO. VEHICLES STOLEN: 0 NO. PREMISES ENTERED: 0		
LOCATION: RESIDENCE - SINGLE FAMILY		
NO. VICTIMS: 00 NO. ARRESTED: 0 FORCED ENTRY: 0		
NAME LIST:		
ROLE:		
COMPLAINANT		
SEX: F RACE: B HT: 507 WT: 329 HR: BLACK EYE: BROWN		
BUSINESS PHONE:		
OTHER		
SEX: F RACE: B HT: 507 WT: 329 HR: BLACK EYE: BROWN		
RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:		
BUSINESS PHONE:		
<p>ON MONDAY 08/19/2024 AT APPROXIMATELY 1526 HOURS AS A ROAD PATROL DEPUTY OF DISTRICT 13 (CITY OF BELLE GLADE), I DEPUTY LEONARD RESPONDED TO [REDACTED] IN BELLE GLADE, FL IN REFERENCE TO A CIVIL CASE. CONTACT WAS MADE WITH THE COMPLAINANT MRS. [REDACTED] WHOM STATED SHE PLACED A HOMESTEAD ON HER HOME TO LOWER HER TAXES AT THE END OF THE YEAR. [REDACTED] RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE PALM BEACH COUNTY TAX COLLECTORS OFFICE IN REFERENCE SHE OWES BACK TAXES UPWARDS TO \$3500.00 PER THE LETTER DUE TO THE HOUSE BEING RENTED OUT SINCE JANUARY 2023. [REDACTED] STATED SHE NEVER RENTED OUT THE PROPERTY AND SEVERAL PEOPLE LIVE IN THE RESIDENCE.</p> <p>[REDACTED] STATED SHE WENT TO THE TAX OFFICE WHERE SHE FILED AND FOUND A DOCUMENT FOR A LEASE AGREEMENT WHICH SHE DID NOT AUTHORIZE BUT IT HAS HER NAME IN THE SIGNATURE PLACE. [REDACTED] STATED THAT IS NOT HER SIGNATURE. [REDACTED] HAS NOT LOST OR GAINED ANY FUNDS OF THAT DOCUMENT AS OF YET. MRS. [REDACTED] WAS INFORMED TO GET WITH HER ATTORNEY FOR FURTHER LEGAL ADVICE SINCE NO CRIME HAS BEEN COMMITTED AS OF YET. THIS CASE IS FOR DOCUMENT PURPOSES.</p>		

OIG Interview of Applicant

Applicant told the OIG that he discovered that Landlord had a residence for rent through their mutual family members. He learned about the County rental assistance program from Landlord once she became his landlord. Applicant moved into the residence in the summer of 2022. Applicant confirmed that the lease submitted with his applications is his lease. According to Applicant, he paid rent to Landlord in cash for about three or four months before becoming unemployed. Around that time, Landlord also moved into the residence without lowering his rental payments.

Applicant told the OIG that he reviewed the assistance applications. He submitted and confirmed that all information on the applications and supporting documents were accurate, except for the FPL documents that showed his name. He has never had a FPL bill in his name. He told the OIG that the FPL bill was in Landlord's name while he lived at the residence. When Applicant needed the FPL documents for the applications, Landlord provided them via a link to his phone, which he then uploaded without reviewing them. When asked, Applicant had no explanation for why these FPL records were in his name.

Applicant confirmed that Landlord's current contact number matches the number listed for her on his applications. According to Applicant, after the OIG contacted him regarding the rental assistance, he spoke with Landlord at that number. He told the OIG that during

their conversation, Landlord told him she had to return approximately \$3,000 of rental assistance money because she should not have been approved and mentioned owing taxes. Applicant said Landlord asked him if he was going to pay the \$3,000 or give her the money, which he found "confusing." Applicant said that the check for his rental assistance from the County went to Landlord; he said he never received a check.

Applicant stated he received an email from the County stating he could no longer receive assistance because the County believed that application supporting documents had been altered. Applicant was uncertain if this was related to the second application. Applicant recalled needing to apply monthly to continue receiving help. Shortly thereafter, he left the residence because he could no longer pay Landlord. He did not follow-up with the County thereafter.

Applicant asserted that he did not alter any documents, including the FPL documents, and no one instructed him to do so. He stated that he simply uploaded what Landlord sent him without reviewing those supporting records.

Applicant stated he never dealt with Landlord's daughter regarding rent. Landlord's daughter moved back into the residence shortly after Landlord did, during the time period that Applicant was still living there.

The OIG presented Applicant with the police report filed by Landlord's daughter with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, in which Landlord's daughter claimed she never rented the residence. Applicant believes that Landlord's daughter filed the police report because Landlord and Landlord's daughter wanted to avoid repaying the assistance funds. Upon reading the police report, Applicant believed that Landlord's claim that he should return the rental assistance monies to her was actually related to her tax obligation. Applicant told the OIG that during a conversation he had with Landlord, Applicant questioned why he would have to repay anything since he never received any money.

OIG Initial Attempts to Interview Homeowners Landlord and Landlord's daughter

The OIG made several attempts to interview Landlord, but she did not respond. The OIG also reached out to Landlord's daughter via telephone. Landlord's daughter told the OIG that her mother was aware the OIG reached out to her. Landlord's daughter said they had received a document saying that there was a lien placed on their property due to Landlord's daughter's name being used to apply to a community services program. Landlord's daughter said she did not apply to a program. Landlord's daughter told the OIG that a representative from the County told her to file a police report, which she did. The police report was submitted to the Tax Collector's Office and thereafter, Landlord's daughter was told that the lien had been removed.

Initially, Landlord's daughter agreed to meet with the OIG, along with Landlord, at their residence. However, on the day of the interview, Landlord's daughter canceled the interview. Afterwards, the OIG made attempts to reschedule with Landlord's daughter and Landlord, with no success.

OIG Interview of Landlord

Thereafter, on January 12, 2026, the OIG emailed a draft (Draft Report) of this report to Landlord and Landlord's daughter.⁴ On January 20, 2026, Landlord called the OIG.⁵ Landlord stated that Landlord's daughter received the OIG Draft Report and that Landlord wanted to be interviewed. We interviewed Landlord via telephone.

Landlord stated that Applicant's grandmother is her sister. Landlord initially told the OIG that Applicant was caught up on his rent; however, later in the interview she stated, "To be honest with you sweetie, he wasn't really... he wasn't even much really staying here." Landlord then told the OIG that Applicant was not living with her for the rental payment period, and has never lived with her. She does not have a rental unit at her residence, but said that Applicant told her, "If I tell the people I stay with you, they will give you the rent money." Landlord stated that Applicant was supposed to bring his clothes and stay there, but he never did. Landlord told OIG that Applicant never paid rent and never stayed at her residence.

Landlord told the OIG that Applicant told her the County paid for people's rent, and that he knew this because it was something his entire family was receiving. Applicant thereafter brought assistance documents for her signature, and she signed them. However, she could not remember specifically what the documents were. Landlord told the OIG that Applicant registered her as a landlord. She said that Landlord's daughter had no involvement in the rental assistance application process.

Landlord stated that after Applicant received an assistance check from the County, he took her to Synovus Bank in Wellington, Florida to open a bank account to deposit the check. When the funds became available, she split the cash proceeds with Applicant. She never used that bank account again.

Landlord told the OIG that she does not have an email address and does not know how to use email. She stated that she did not recognize [REDACTED] the email address listed for her as the landlord.

According to Landlord, Landlord's daughter filed a police report because Landlord's daughter's name was used in some way in the rental assistance application process. Landlord stated that her home's FPL account is in Landlord's daughter's name.

Landlord said that Applicant called Landlord asking why Landlord's daughter filed a police report about him. In response, Landlord asked Applicant what he had done that caused Landlord's daughter to feel it necessary file a police report. Applicant did not answer, and since that call, Applicant has not called or spoken to her.

⁴ The OIG's ordinance requires that a Draft Report be sent to affected persons being reported on or who is the subject of a recommendation. Such person has ten (10) calendar days to submit a written explanation or rebuttal of the findings before the report or recommendation is finalized. Any response(s) are included in our published Final Report.

⁵ According to Landlord, Landlord's daughter was present in the background during this telephonic interview.

During the interview, Landlord asked Landlord's daughter, who Landlord said was in the next room, how the FPL bill was paid. Landlord's daughter told Landlord that she pays the electric bill through the FPL app and does not receive a paper bill. Landlord stated that neither she nor Landlord's daughter has ever given Applicant any FPL bill documents.

Landlord concluded by saying that Applicant brought the idea to apply for rental assistance to her and she knew nothing about it prior to him doing so; she had never received or signed up to receive money from the government before. She stated, "I'm going to be honest with you, it looked good to help pay some of my little bills and tax cost."

OIG Review of Funding Recipient Address

County records show that Landlord's residential address is [REDACTED] in Belle Glade, Florida, but that Applicant's assistance check was mailed to [REDACTED], in Belle Glade Florida. Publicly available voter registration records show that the resident of [REDACTED], not Landlord.

Conclusion

Applicant acknowledged during his interview with the OIG that he submitted a rental assistance application to the County and that he attached its supporting documents, including an FPL account statement. Although he told the OIG that he did not know their content, Applicant checked the box on the application attesting to the accuracy of the documents he submitted. FPL provided the OIG the true FPL account statement for the rental address, which differed from the statement attached to Applicant's application. Applicant told the OIG he received the FPL account statement from Landlord. Applicant told the OIG that he has never had an FPL account.

Landlord admitted to the OIG that Applicant never lived at the rental location and did not pay rent to her. She also told the OIG that Applicant registered her as a landlord and received the rental assistance check from the County. According to Landlord, she and Applicant split the proceeds from the assistance application. Landlord's statement to the OIG is corroborated by the recipient address for the assistance check; the check was sent to [REDACTED], not Landlord's address.

We found that Applicant, in concert with Landlord, submitted false applications to the County. As a result of Applicant and Landlord's actions, the County approved one application and issued a check totaling \$7,400.00 to Landlord for Applicant's rental assistance, which she split with Applicant.

Thus, the allegation is **supported**.

IDENTIFIED, QUESTIONED, AND AVOIDABLE COSTS

Identified Costs: \$7,400.00

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Inspector General's Investigations Division would like to thank the Palm Beach Community Services Department staff for their cooperation throughout this investigation.

RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

We make one recommendation; that the County seek reimbursement of \$7,400.00 in issued funds.

RESPONSE FROM MANAGEMENT

Pursuant to Article XII, Section 2-427 of the Palm Beach County Code, the County was provided the opportunity to submit a written explanation or rebuttal to the findings as stated in this Investigative Report within ten (10) calendar days. Their written response is as follows:

The County concurs with the IG recommendation included in Investigative Report 2025-0002. The Community Services Department will seek reimbursement for \$7,400 issued to the subject named in this investigation.

RESPONSE FROM APPLICANT

Pursuant to Article XII, Section 2-427 of the Palm Beach County Code, Applicant was provided the opportunity to submit a written explanation or rebuttal to the findings as stated in this Investigative Report within ten (10) calendar days. His written response is as follows:

I am submitting this written response in connection with the Draft Investigative Report provided by the Office of Inspector General.

I respectfully state that I did not willfully or knowingly submit any false or misleading information in relation to this matter. At all relevant times, I was a tenant renting a residence from another individual and relied in good faith on information that was provided to me. I had no reason to believe that any information associated with the rental arrangement was inaccurate or improper.

I further state that I did not receive any funds, payments, or financial benefit related to the circumstances described in the Draft Investigative Report. I didn't take Landlord to any bank or split funds.

To the extent that any incorrect information may have been used, it was done without my knowledge or intent, and I did not participate in or benefit from such actions. I have cooperated fully and will continue to cooperate as requested. If funds are to be reimbursed.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this response. I respectfully request that this statement be included in the Final Investigative Report.

Sincerely,

Applicant

RESPONSE FROM LANDLORD

Pursuant to Article XII, Section 2-427 of the Palm Beach County Code, Landlord was provided the opportunity to submit a written explanation or rebuttal to the findings as stated in this Investigative Report within ten (10) calendar days. Landlord did not submit a response.

RESPONSE FROM LANDLORD'S DAUGHTER

Pursuant to Article XII, Section 2-427 of the Palm Beach County Code, Landlord's daughter was provided the opportunity to submit a written explanation or rebuttal to the findings as stated in this Investigative Report within ten (10) calendar days. Landlord's daughter did not submit a response.

This Investigation has been conducted in accordance with the ASSOCIATION OF INSPECTORS GENERAL Principles & Quality Standards for Investigations.