



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

3/29/18

VISALIA CRAIGSLIST RENTAL SCAMMER SENTENCED

Today in Department 4 of the Tulare County Superior Court, Visalia Division, Judge Brett Alldredge sentenced Juan Manual Martinez, aka, Eddie Martinez, age 35, of Bakersfield, to two-hundred and ten days in jail plus restitution for real estate fraud. On December 11, 2017, Martinez pleaded no contest to one felony count of grand theft, one felony count of attempted grand theft, and one misdemeanor count of petty theft.

In November 2016, Martinez falsely advertised on Craigslist to rent a home in Visalia. When inquiries were made, Martinez arranged to meet at the house and conduct a walk through. Without the owner's permission, Martinez made arrangements to rent the property and collected deposits from the victims. When one victim took her children to see their new home, a rental management company employee at the property advised her that the home had not been rented. The same rental company was contacted by another victim who had paid a deposit to Martinez but then saw the property management sign at the house. The company advised the victim to contact the Visalia Police Department. The investigation revealed that Martinez had also fraudulently made an agreement to rent the property to this victim.

Prior to his sentencing, Martinez was required to pay \$1,735.00 to compensate his victims' financial losses.

Fraudulent lease agreements can have far reaching effects on unsuspecting families. Not only can families lose their money, but it can leave them homeless. The District Attorney's Office is dedicated to combating fraud and real estate related fraudulent crimes. If you know of real estate related crimes, contact the Bureau of Investigations at (559) 636-5410.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Rodney Blaco and investigated by Criminal Investigator John Clark of the District Attorney's Real Estate Fraud Unit and the Visalia Police Department.

*Media inquiries can be directed to the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare
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