



718.286.6000  
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2024

CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315  
[QDACommunications@queensda.org](mailto:QDACommunications@queensda.org)

**LONG ISLAND MAN SENTENCED TO THREE TO NINE YEARS FOR STEALING ELDERLY  
WOMAN'S EAST ELMHURST HOME**

*Defendant Forged Documents Submitted to the City*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that Marcus Wilcher was sentenced today to three to nine years in prison for stealing an East Elmhurst home from its elderly owner by using forged documents and by creating a fictitious character – the owner's purported son -- to facilitate the transaction. The home was then sold for \$320,000 to a developer who intended to flip it.

District Attorney Katz said: "We will not allow scam artists to get away with targeting homes thinking they will make an easy profit through deed fraud. I created a Housing and Worker Protection Bureau to prosecute bad actors who want to steal people's most valuable asset, their home. Thank you to the Office of New York State Attorney General Letitia James for their assistance in this prosecution."

Wilcher, 48, of Carll Drive in Bayshore, pleaded guilty to grand larceny in the second degree before Justice Leigh Cheng on June 21. Today, the defendant was sentenced to three to nine years in prison. The sentence will run concurrently to the sentence the defendant also received today after a guilty plea in a similar deed theft case brought by the Office of Attorney General Letitia James.

The District Attorney's office will file a motion and conduct a hearing to apply a state statute to restore the deed to its rightful owner, sparing the victim the time and expense of additional legal proceedings in civil court.

According to the charges and plea agreement:

- The victim owned a home on 106<sup>th</sup> Street in East Elmhurst since May 1974 and was not living there in autumn of 2022.
- On November 1, 2022, Marcus Wilcher filed a deed with the New York City Department of Finance transferring the property from its rightful owner to an LLC, with a sale price of \$320,000.
- To facilitate the property transfer, Wilcher obtained identifying information about the rightful owner such as her date of birth and Social Security number and then created a forged New York state driver's license in the name of the owner.

- Wilcher also created an email address purported to belong to the owner and invented a character named “Paul” who was supposed to be her son.
- The defendant – operating as “Paul” – hired an attorney to represent the owner and her “son.” He forged a power of attorney so the lawyer could represent the owner in real estate, banking and business transactions.
- After an investigation, it was determined that the victim did not grant power of attorney to the lawyer and her signature on the documents was forged; the lawyer hired by the defendant said he had never met the property owner and communicated with someone he believed to be the victim’s son; the phone number purported to belong to the owner was actually Wilcher’s number; the contract of sale for the property was electronically signed using a fake email address that was tied to Wilcher; and the proceeds from the sale of the house were transferred to bank accounts belonging to Wilcher.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Talia Vogel of the District Attorney’s Housing and Worker Protection Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys William Jorgenson, Bureau Chief, Christina Hanophy, Senior Deputy Chief, and Rachel Stein, Deputy Chief, under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

#

**Note to Editors:** Archived press releases are available at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).

