



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

FORMER BOARD CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF HEALTHCARE NON-PROFIT INDICTED FOR
EMBEZZLEMENT, BRIBERY AND KICKBACK SCHEMES

Defendants Allegedly Abused Their Positions to Obtain More Than \$1.3 Million
in Stolen Funds and Kickbacks from Vendors

Earlier today, in federal court in Brooklyn, an indictment was unsealed charging Jean Ronald Tirelus and Roberto Samedy for embezzling more than \$1.3 million from a Brooklyn-based non-profit organization that provided home care services and operated homeless shelters in New York City. Tirelus was the former chairman of the organization's board of directors, and Samedy was the executive director of the organization. In addition, the indictment charged Tirelus, Samedy, Edouardo St. Fort and Miguel Jorge for their roles in a related scheme in which Tirelus and Samedy steered business to companies controlled by St. Fort and Jorge in exchange for bribes and kickbacks. Tirelus and Samedy were each charged with wire fraud, embezzlement, and bribery-related offenses, and conspiracy to commit the same, as well as money laundering conspiracy. St. Fort and Jorge were charged with federal program bribery and related charges. Tirelus, Samedy and Jorge are being arraigned this afternoon before United States Chief Magistrate Judge Vera M. Scanlon. St. Fort was arrested in Boston, Massachusetts and will be arraigned in Eastern District of New York at a later date.

Joseph Nocella, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Christopher Ryan, Acting Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation (DOI); and James C. Barnacle, Jr., Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI) announced the arrests and indictment.

"As alleged, the defendants used their leadership positions to loot public funds from an organization devoted to serving vulnerable New Yorkers," stated United States Attorney

Nocella. “Rooting out corruption is a priority for our Office, and we will hold accountable anyone who exploits charitable trust for private gain.”

“As charged, these defendants devised a scheme that siphoned more than \$1.3 million from a publicly-funded nonprofit that provided home health care services and received City homeless shelter contracts. Two of the defendants were leaders at the nonprofit who capitalized on the City’s urgent need for homeless shelter providers by allegedly steering business to favored vendors in exchange for bribes and kickbacks, according to the indictment. Those who exploit the City’s need for homeless shelters endanger the very programs meant to help unhoused people. I thank the City Department of Social Services for originally referring issues related to this nonprofit to DOI; and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York and the FBI for their partnership on this investigation and their commitment to protect precious tax dollars,” stated Acting DOI Commissioner Ryan.

As set forth in court filings, the charges arise from an investigation of a Brooklyn-based nonprofit organization that provided home care services to elderly New Yorkers and individuals with acute medical needs and also operated homeless shelters (the Public Interest Organization, which operated two charitable entities known as Nonprofit #1 and Nonprofit #2). The Public Interest Organization received millions of dollars in Medicaid payments and has been awarded hundreds of millions of dollars in funding from New York City.

As a result of their leadership positions at the Public Interest Organization, Tirelus and Samedy exercised significant control over its operations and finances. Between August 2020 and January 2024, Tirelus and Samedy exploited their positions, stealing more than \$1.3 million from the Public Interest Organization through several forms of embezzlement and fraud. For example, in May 2023, Tirelus and Samedy fraudulently induced the board of directors to authorize an \$800,000 payment that went to a shell company controlled by Tirelus. Tirelus and Samedy falsely advised the board of directors that the Public Interest Organization had been approached by a bank regarding a joint venture to invest in affordable housing. After the board approved a proposal authorizing the Public Interest Organization to invest, Tirelus and Samedy caused Nonprofit #1 to wire \$800,000 to a bank account controlled by Tirelus, who diverted the funds to the benefit of himself and Samedy.

Separately, St. Fort and Jorge controlled several vendor companies that provided private security services, facilities maintenance, and furniture to homeless shelters operated by the Public Interest Organization. Between February 2023 and January 2024, Tirelus and Samedy steered millions of dollars of the Public Interest Organization’s business towards the companies controlled by St. Fort and Jorge in return for bribes and kickbacks.

The charges in the indictment are allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, Tirelus and Samedy each face up to 20 years in prison, and St. Fort and Jorge face each face up to 10 years in prison.

The government’s case is being handled by the Public Integrity Section of the United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York. Assistant United States Attorneys Laura Zuckerwise and Andrew Wang are in charge of the prosecution with assistance from Paralegal Specialist Daniel Arakawa.

The Defendants:

RONALD JEAN TIRELUS

Age: 50

Brooklyn, New York

ROBERTO SAMEDY

Age: 50

Brooklyn, New York

EDOUARDO ST. FORT

Age: 47

Taunton, Massachusetts

MIGUEL JORGE

Age: 52

College Point, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 26-CR-69 (RER)