



Rick Staly, Sheriff

## FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

# NEWS RELEASE

**Date:** Friday, August 16, 2019  
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**Release #:** 183

## **Former Palm Coast Doctor Fruehan Pleads No-Contest to One Count of Battery on a Person 65 or Older**

Florence Fruehan, 59, a former local doctor, pleaded no-contest on Friday afternoon to Battery on a Person 65 or Older, a 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree Felony. He was sentenced to 24 months of probation and is required to have a mental health evaluation, no contact with any victims, and may never again work in any capacity in the medical field.

The charges stem from past patients of Fruehan's reporting to law enforcement that the doctor had touched them inappropriately during office visits and that the touching happened without the consent of the victim, and without serving any legitimate medical purpose.

"Our detectives have done a great job working this case and working with the State Attorney's Office to seek justice for the victims," Sheriff Rick Staly said. "I hope the victims see this as a positive outcome and find peace knowing that he will never practice medicine again."

Fruehan was facing two counts of Battery on a Woman 65 or Older along with a misdemeanor charge of Battery. The plea agreement drops the additional felony and misdemeanor charges. If the terms of his probation are successfully met, his probation may end at the halfway point, or after just 12 months.

***Original News Releases below.***

**Date:** Wednesday, January 16, 2019  
**Contact:** Brittany Kershaw; (386) 586-2637; [bkershaw@flaglersheriff.com](mailto:bkershaw@flaglersheriff.com)

## **Former Palm Coast Doctor Fruehan Arrested on Two Felony Charges**

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Florence Fruehan, 59, was arrested on Wednesday afternoon after Flagler County Sheriff's Deputies executed two Capias orders issued by a Flagler County Judge. The orders and the arrest stem from months-long investigations into numerous reports from patients and former patients of the former doctor.

Two victims reported that the doctor had touched them inappropriately during office visits and that the touching happened without the consent of either victim, and without serving any legitimate medical purpose.

The incidents, while sexual in nature, did not meet the statutory requirements for a Sex Crime. The fitting charge is Battery on a Person 65 Years of Age or Older. Due to the victims' ages in both instances, the charge is considered a felony under Florida law.

"Our detectives have not stopped working on this case since it was first reported to us," Sheriff Rick Staly said. "There is still more work to be done but I am pleased that the State Attorney's Office has moved forward on these two felony charges. I hope the victims feel that justice is being served."

Fruehan was arrested for two counts of Battery on a Person 65 Years of Age or Older and will be booked into the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility. He is will be held on a \$10,000.00 bond.

**Date:** Thursday September 20, 2018

**Contact:** Anna Hackett | (386) 281-9880 | [ahackett@flaglersheriff.com](mailto:ahackett@flaglersheriff.com)

## Charges Filed Against Palm Coast's Dr. Fruehan

The Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) has filed a charging affidavit with the State Attorney's Office on Dr. Florence Fruehan recommending he be charged on two cases of misdemeanor battery. The charges are in connection with recent allegations that accuse Dr. Fruehan of inappropriately touching a female patient during an office visit.

After receiving complaints earlier this year FCSO detectives began an investigation and requested anyone with similar experiences make a report with the Sheriff's office and/or the Florida Department of Health. Since then, several more individuals came forward and reported similar incidents, describing the same inappropriate touching in multiple cases. Unfortunately, in many of these cases the statute of limitations has expired making criminal charges impossible.

"I am very proud of our detectives and the excellent work they have done following every lead to make sure this individual is held responsible for the trauma that he has caused to victims," Sheriff Staly

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said. “Unfortunately, the statute of limitations makes it impossible to charge him on every alleged assault. We are still investigating other allegations against him. We are ask that anyone who may have been assaulted to come forward so we can make sure this guy never has the opportunity to victimize someone again.”

In two cases, probable cause was found and the statute of limitations had not expired so FCSO Detectives have submitted and recommended misdemeanor charges for battery with the State Attorney’s Office on Dr. Fruehan.

Additional allegations are still actively being investigated and more charges may be filed in the future. FCSO asks that anyone who was a patient of Dr. Fruehan and feels they had an inappropriate experience with him to contact us at 386-313-4911 to file a formal complaint.

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