



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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

NEWS RELEASE

Date: March 6, 2025
Prepared by: Public Affairs Office
Email: PAO@flaglersheriff.com
Release #: 2025 – 036

CASE UPDATE: Former Paramedic Arrested for Sex Offense Found to Have Committed Fraud, Faces Additional Charges

BUNNELL, Fla. — Following an investigation by the Flagler County Sheriff's Office General Assignment Unit and the State Attorney's Office for the Seventh Circuit, additional charges have been filed against James Melady, a former Flagler County Fire Rescue employee who was arrested in September 2024 for sexually battering an unconscious victim in an ambulance. During the investigation, detectives determined that he had defrauded multiple victims by stealing their credit cards and identification while performing his official duties as a paramedic.

Detective John Castanheira led the investigation, which found that Melady stole debit cards and personal identification information from victims who suffered medical emergencies and used them to make fraudulent purchases. In total, three victims were identified during the investigation.

In one instance, FCFR was dispatched to an emergency in which a 92-year-old victim had fallen and required transportation to the hospital. During the incident, the victim's purse was given to Melady to bring to the hospital. Prior to returning the purse to the victim at the hospital, Melady stole the victim's debit card. Several days later, Melady used the debit card without the victim's knowledge to make two purchases at Sam's Club in Daytona Beach, Florida, totaling \$715.38.

Following the investigation, detectives obtained an arrest warrant. Melady, who was already being held in the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility from his September 2024 arrest, was rearrested for Fraudulent Use of Personal Identification without Consent of a Victim 60 Years of Age or Older and Unlawful Possession of a Stolen Credit Card. He is being held without bond due to his prior arrest.

*Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency*



“After a thorough investigation by our General Assignment Unit and our partners at the State Attorney’s Office, it turns out that not only is this person a predator and a pervert, but he’s also a thief,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “He continually violated his oath and used his position as a first responder to take advantage of victims. He’s in the Green Roof Inn, and he’ll stay there until he goes to state prison, where he belongs.”

The investigation is still ongoing. Anyone who was transported in an FCFR ambulance and then noticed unusual purchases on their credit card bills or debit bank account are encouraged to contact the Flagler County Sheriff’s Office by calling 386-313-4911 or emailing TIPS@flaglersheriff.com.

Original Release Date: September 12, 2024

Original Release #: 2024 – 160

Former Flagler County Fire Rescue Employee Arrested for Sexual Battery of an Unconscious Victim in an Ambulance

BUNNELL, Fla. — On September 6, the Flagler County Sheriff’s Office Major Case Unit was contacted by the Daytona Beach Police Department Major Case Unit regarding an investigation into a former Flagler County Fire Rescue employee, James Melady, 37, of Daytona Beach. DBPD advised while investigating Melady on cases in their jurisdiction, a video was discovered of Melady molesting an unconscious female in Flagler County while on-duty and in uniform while performing his official duties.

FCSO Master Detective Darrell Butler was assigned the investigation and began working with DBPD to investigate the case. Through investigative means, MD Butler identified the victim as a former resident of Flagler Beach and learned that Flagler County Fire Rescue had been called to her residence on October 17, 2021. The incident occurred in the patient transport area of a Flagler County Fire Rescue ambulance while the victim was being transported to a hospital in Palm Coast.

FCSO Major Case Unit detectives met with DBPD detectives to review the video, which explicitly showed the suspect violating the victim while she was clearly unconscious. Detectives met with the victim, who was completely unaware of being attacked by Melady.

On September 11, MD Butler obtained an arrest warrant for Melady on one count of Sexual Battery on a Helpless Person and one count of Video Voyeurism on a Victim 19 Years Old or Older.

Major Case Unit detectives coordinated with the DBPD to locate and arrest Melady in their jurisdiction. Major Case Unit detectives also interviewed Melady, who confessed to his crimes and told detectives he retired from Flagler County Fire Rescue earlier this year. Melady was arrested on the warrant by DBPD and is being held in the Volusia County Jail under no bond.

Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency





James Tyler Melady (Volusia Co. Jail Mugshot)

“It’s unfathomable to me what this predator did to an unconscious victim while on duty while being entrusted to provide proper emergency medical care but instead sexually assault her,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “I’m thankful we quickly got him off the street and in jail where he belongs. I also commend our Major Case Unit for their tireless effort to catch predators like this, and for working closely with our partners at the Daytona Beach Police Department to bring this pervert to justice. It is likely there are other victims of his disgusting behavior.”

If you believe you may have been a victim of Melady or have information on this case or other victims, call the Flagler County Sheriff’s non-emergency line at 386-313-4911 or email TIPS@flaglersheriff.com.

###

*Proudly Serving the Community Since 1917
A Five Diamond Accredited Law Enforcement Agency*

