



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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

NEWS RELEASE

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Russian National Arrested for Credit Card Fraud in Palm Coast, Suspect in Country Illegally

BUNNELL, Fla. — On Friday, August 8, Flagler County Sheriff's Office deputies arrested Mikhail Vasilev, 43, an illegal Russian national living in Palm Coast on two warrants for credit card fraud following two separate investigations conducted by FCSO detectives. Vasilev obtained customer credit cards to purchase construction material for residential home repairs and later used the cards for unauthorized, personal transactions.

Detectives began investigating Vasilev in June 2025 after the victims noticed unauthorized transactions on their credit card accounts. According to one victim, Vasilev made a transaction in January 2025 at a local pharmacy for prescription medication totaling \$470. During the investigation, detectives determined that Vasilev used the "tap" feature — also known as contactless payment — to complete the purchase. Vasilev did not have to show proof of identity or insert a pin to use this feature. He did, however, provide the pharmacist with his ID to receive his prescription medications.

A second victim also reported fraudulent activity on his credit cards after his credit card information was provided over the phone to a Home Depot associate, who subsequently stored it on Vasilev's commercial Home Depot account. The victim told deputies that, while he initially gave Vasilev one of his cards willingly to buy supplies, he had requested both cards back on multiple occasions, but Vasilev did not return them.

According to the second victim, Vasilev made over \$22,000 in fraudulent purchases from April 2024 through December 2024. These purchases included payments to the St. Johns County Tax Collector's

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Office for Vasilev to reinstate his driver's license; a utility bill payment; and multiple transactions at O'Reilly's Auto Parts, Kennedy Space Center, and National eBike Store. In one transaction, Vasilev bought over \$4,000 in supplies at Home Depot and then had them delivered to a residence, not connected to the victim, that he was renovating in Palm Coast.



Mikhail Vasilev (Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility mugshot)

Through investigative means, detectives were able to link Vasilev to \$10,307.65 in fraudulent transactions connected to the second investigation. When questioned by detectives, Vasilev, who has no known criminal history, expressed remorse and agreed to pay the money back when he could.

Both victims cancelled their credit cards upon learning of the transactions.

The Department of Homeland Security has placed a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainer on Vasilev, and ICE will assume custody and start the deportation process following the resolution of these cases.

"This arrest is a prime example of our commitment to protecting our residents from those who come here illegally and commit crimes. We will continue to work with our local and federal partners to ensure those who target our residents are held accountable," said Sheriff Rick Staly. "If you enter our country illegally and commit crimes in Flagler County, expect a quick trip to the Green Roof Inn before being deported."

Vasilev was arrested for grand theft - \$10 to \$20k, petit theft, and two counts of fraudulent use of a credit card. He was transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where he is being held on a \$45,000 bond and an ICE Detainer.

Sheriff Staly also reminds residents to always hire properly licensed, bonded and insured workers. Residents can verify licenses by visiting the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation's website at www2.myfloridalicense.com/online-services/, or checking with the Better Business Bureau. Additionally, Palm Coast residents may contact the City of Palm Coast by calling 386-

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986-2360 or going to palmcoast.gov.

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