



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

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FCSO Deputies Catch Burglar in the Act After Multi-Agency Investigation

Suspect Has Dozens of Prior Arrests with Rap Sheet 64-Pages Long

BUNNELL, Fla. — Following a coordinated multi-agency investigation, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office, the Volusia Sheriff's Office, and the New Smyrna Beach Police Department arrested William Whitaker, 41, of Palm Coast, in connection with a string of burglaries across the region.



William Whitaker II (VSO Branch Jail Mugshot)

Between Feb. 7 and 10, investigators across multiple agencies identified a pattern of forced-entry business burglaries in which the suspect shattered glass, entered businesses, and targeted cash

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register drawers.

In Flagler County, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office investigated two commercial burglaries:

- On Feb. 9, 2026, at approximately 3:41 a.m., deputies and detectives investigated a burglary at A.L. Prime Gas, located at 6700 U.S. Highway 1 in Bunnell. Surveillance video showed a suspect smashing the front glass door and stealing a cash register drawer and cash. Damage to the glass door was estimated to exceed \$1,000.
- On Feb. 10, 2026, at approximately 3:52 a.m., deputies and detectives investigated a burglary at Crystal Nail Salon, located at 4984 Palm Coast Parkway NW in Palm Coast. Surveillance video showed the suspect breaking the glass door, reaching inside to unlock the door, and stealing the cash register drawer. The business owner reported approximately \$500 was in the register. Damage was estimated at \$1,000.

The Bunnell Police Department also investigated a commercial burglary at Grace Beauty Supply, located at 2323 N. State Street, Unit 4, in Bunnell, at approximately 1:26 a.m. on Feb. 9, 2026. Investigators determined the method of entry and items stolen were consistent with the burglaries investigated by FCSO, and the case remains part of the broader multi-agency investigation.

Through investigative means, along with information developed through the FCSO's Real Time Crime Center, detectives identified a suspect vehicle believed to be connected to all three Flagler County incidents and several incidents in Volusia County.

On Feb. 12, 2026, FCSO detectives conducted surveillance in coordination with the Volusia Sheriff's Office and the New Smyrna Beach Police Department as the suspect vehicle traveled from Palm Coast into New Smyrna Beach.

In a combined effort, detectives with FCSO and VSO, along with NSBPD officers, caught Whitaker as he attempted to break into ABC Liquor, located at 2360 State Road 44, in New Smyrna Beach. Detectives maintained surveillance as Whitaker positioned his vehicle near closed businesses, and when they heard sounds consistent with glass being struck, local agencies moved in. VSO deputies and NSBPD officers apprehended Whitaker before he could break the glass and enter or flee, taking him into custody without incident.

NSBPD officers who responded to ABC Liquor confirmed damage to an exterior window, including strike marks and a small opening consistent with an attempted forced entry. Damage was estimated at more than \$1,000. NSBPD officers located burglary tools on Whitaker, including a skeleton lock pick set and a mask.

NSBPD officers arrested Whitaker for burglary of a structure with property damage and possession of

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burglary tools and transported him to the Volusia County Branch Jail.

Flagler detectives obtained arrest warrants for two counts of burglary of a structure causing damage in excess of \$1,000, two counts of criminal mischief (\$1,000 or more), and two counts of felony petit theft. Whitaker's Flagler warrants included no bond for burglary the burglary charges and a total of \$10,000 bonds for the criminal mischief and theft charges.

"I commend our detectives, RTCC and PACE Units for quickly developing a suspect and working with our partners to quickly stop his burglary spree," said Flagler County Sheriff Rick Staly. "Our deputies and detectives, along with the Volusia Sheriff's Office deputies and New Smyrna Beach Police Department officers, coordinated surveillance and enforcement that stopped this suspect in his tracks before another business became his victim. This career criminal learned the hard-way that if you make the mistake of targeting Flagler County businesses we will track you down and put you in jail. This dirtbag with dozens of arrests needs to go to prison."

Whitaker's rap sheet in Florida is 64 pages long. He has previously faced dozens of charges across Collier, Lee, Hillsborough, Osceola, Baker, Jacksonville and Leon Counties. Those charges include burglary, grand theft, battery, possession of burglary tools, violation of probation, obstruction and fleeing/eluding.

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