



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

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Florida Woman Arrested for Fraud After Selling Multiple Properties She Did Not Own**

BUNNELL, Fla. — The Flagler County Sheriff's Office Fugitive Unit, with assistance from the DeFuniak Springs Police Department, has arrested a Florida woman on a Flagler County fugitive warrant for fraud following a two-year investigation into the fraudulent sale of property in Flagler County.

FCSO General Assignment Unit detectives began investigating after the Flagler County Emergency Communications Center received a call in January 2024 from a woman who stated that her property in the S-Section had been sold to another party, and she only learned of the sale after she was unable to pay her property taxes now that the property was listed under someone else's name.

Detectives began investigating a similar case in April 2024 involving the sale of a vacant lot in the W-Section after the victim's cousin went to check on the property only to discover someone had built a home on the property without the owner's knowledge.

Records from the sale of the property in the S-Section listed the victim as the seller; however, detectives determined the photo on the driver's license provided in the transaction was not that of the victim but rather that of Cheryl Annette Jefferson, 63, of Bartow, Florida.

Further investigation revealed that wire transfers from the sale of both properties were deposited into a bank account Jefferson opened in December 2022. Since the account's inception, Jefferson also wrote several checks to other individuals along with checks to herself that she deposited into a separate bank account in her name.

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*Cheryl Annette Jefferson (Walton County Jail mugshot)*

In addition to these deposits, detectives also determined that Jefferson wired funds from the account to her Coinbase account for cryptocurrency exchange. Jefferson then transferred cryptocurrency to two accounts, each owned separately by Nigerian men.

With assistance from the FCSO Real Time Crime Center, detectives identified four other cases connected to Jefferson involving the fraudulent sale of property: two in Lee County, Florida; one in Greene County, Georgia; and a civil case in Pueblo County, Colorado. A review of Jefferson’s bank account showed a total of \$421,995.30 in deposits from the properties sold in all four Florida cases and the case out of Georgia.

Jefferson told detectives she had opened the bank account for a friend — whom she believed to be Brian Kelley, a band member of Florida Georgia Line — and another individual, whom “Brian” had introduced her to. Jefferson also stated that she thought the funds were for the construction of a recording studio in Nashville, Tennessee.

The Polk County Sheriff’s Office assisted detectives with obtaining a search warrant for Jefferson’s cellphone. A review of that cellphone revealed text messages between Jefferson and another individual, Chase Rice, which is the name of another famous country music singer and songwriter. Detectives have determined these text messages show Jefferson’s continued participation in receiving money and moving it to cryptocurrency.

“Crime knows no borders, and it doesn’t stop at the Florida Georgia Line. This criminal may claim she has some high-profile friends, but I don’t see her friends getting her out of the jam she’s put herself in,” said Sheriff Rick Staly.

The DeFuniak Springs Police Department arrested Jefferson on her Flagler County fugitive warrant for organized scheme to defraud over \$50,000. She was transported to the Walton County Jail, where she was later released on \$100,000 bond.

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