PRESS RELEASE

Houston man guilty of defrauding individuals with false promises of legal status

Wednesday, July 9, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

HOUSTON – A 58-year-old Houston resident has entered a guilty plea to conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud, announced U.S. Attorney Nicholas J. Ganjei.

From March 2022 through December 2024, Jesus Carlos Silva pretended to be an immigration attorney affiliated with a Houston-based law firm. He made false promises that he could help people obtain U.S. citizenship and/or other legal immigration status. Silva charged thousands of dollars per person for his "assistance," collecting payments through checks and money orders. He never provided legitimate immigration help and instead offered excuses for delays before ultimately cutting off communication.

Silva instructed several individuals to travel to Houston for fake appointments with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. When they arrived, there were no appointments. He admitted to stealing more than $1,450,555 from over 100 people, most of whom lived in Houston and Chicago. Others were from Texas, Illinois, Louisiana and Florida.

U.S. District Judge George C. Hanks will impose sentencing Sept. 22. At that time, Silva faces up to five years in federal prison and a possible $250,000 maximum fine or a fine of twice the gross gain or twice the gross loss that resulted from the offense.

Silva was permitted to remain on bond pending sentencing.

The FBI conducted the investigation with the assistance of the U.S. Marshals Service and Houston Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Brad Gray and Rodolfo Ramirez are prosecuting the case.

Updated July 9, 2025

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PRESS RELEASE

Former jailer sentenced for sexually assaulting female inmates

A 29-year-old Laredo man has been ordered to federal prison for sexually assaulting two women while working as a corrections officer

December 17, 2025

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Mexican national convicted of federal witness tampering

A 53-year-old man illegally residing in McAllen has been convicted of attempting to threaten or intimidate a government witness from testifying in a pending trial

PRESS RELEASE

Houston man sentenced for role in immigration scheme

Thursday, January 8, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

HOUSTON – A 58-year-old local resident has been ordered to federal prison for conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud and stealing nearly $1.5 million, announced U.S. Attorney Nicholas J. Ganjei.

Jesus Carlos Silva pleaded guilty July 9, 2025, to defrauding individuals with false promises of legal status.

U.S. District Judge George C. Hanks has now ordered Silva to serve 60 months in federal prison to be immediately followed by three years of supervised release. At the hearing, the court heard how Silva made false promises that he could help people obtain U.S. citizenship and/or other legal immigration status in under a year. The court also heard how Silva recruited individuals at churches and obtained payments between $10,000-15,000 yet offered nothing in return.

From March 2022 through December 2024, Silva pretended to be an immigration attorney affiliated with a Houston-based law firm. He charged thousands of dollars per person for his “assistance,” collecting payments through checks and money orders. He never provided legitimate immigration help and made excuses for delays before ultimately cutting off communication.

As part of the scheme, Silva also instructed several individuals to travel to Houston for what they thought were appointments with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. However, once they arrived, there were no such appointments.

He admitted to stealing more than $1,450,555 from over 100 people living in Texas, Illinois, Louisiana and Florida.

He was permitted to remain on bond and voluntarily surrender to a Federal Bureau of Prisons facility to be determined in the near future.

The FBI conducted the investigation with the assistance of the U.S. Marshals Service and Houston Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brad Gray and Rodolfo Ramirez are prosecuting the case.

Updated January 8, 2026

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PRESS RELEASE

McCreery Aviation finance director sentenced in $1.2 million mail fraud scheme

A 57-year-old Mission resident has been ordered to federal prison after diverting company funds to pay for her personal expenses

PRESS RELEASE

Local man indicted for defrauding immigrants with false promises of legal status

Thursday, December 19, 2024

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas

HOUSTON – A 57-year-old Houston man has appeared in federal court for conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud, mail fraud, wire fraud and engaging in monetary transactions in criminally derived property, announced U.S. Attorney Alamdar S. Hamdani.

Jesus Carlos Silva made his initial appearance before U.S. District Judge Yvonne Ho at 2 p.m.

According to the indictment filed Dec. 17, Silva ran a scheme to defraud immigrants from March 2022 until December 2024. He allegedly falsely promised to help them obtain U.S. citizenship or legal immigration status.

The charges allege Silva made false statements and misrepresentations to persuade victims to pay him thousands of dollars. He allegedly posed as an immigration attorney affiliated with Houston-based law firm, despite not being an attorney.

It is alleged that Silva targeted victims, most of whom lacked legal immigration status, and claimed he could secure their citizenship or legal status. He allegedly told some victims he had a close contact at U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services (USCIS) who would expedite their

applications. Silva charged victims between $7000 and $15,000 each, according to the charges.

The indictment further alleges Silva did not provide any assistance to victims regarding their immigration status and failed to secure legal status for them. Instead, he allegedly offered excuses for the lack of progress on their applications and eventually cut off communications.

The charges allege Silva repeatedly instructed victims to travel to Houston for fake appointments with USCIS. When they arrived, Silva allegedly gave excuses for his absence, and they discovered no such appointments had been scheduled.

If convicted, Silva faces up to 20 years in federal prison and a possible $250,000 maximum fine.

The FBI conducted the investigation with the assistance of the U.S. Marshals Service and Houston Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Jessica Feinstein and Rodolfo Ramirez are prosecuting the case.

An information is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. A defendant is presumed innocent unless convicted through due process of law.

Updated December 20, 2024

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