



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

Date: May 31, 2024

Prepared by: Joseph Bober, Flagler County Sheriff's Office Public Affairs Office

Phone and Email: 386-586-4802, PAO@flaglersheriff.com

Release #: 2024 - 98

BPD, FCSO Seeking Additional Victims of Phone Scams **Impersonating FCSO Employee**

BUNNELL, FL – On Thursday, May 30, 2024, the Bunnell Police Department (BPD) and the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) arrested two men in connection with a fraud scheme involving phone calls impersonating an FCSO employee. The agencies are working with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to investigate multiple scam calls from the same day and are seeking additional victims.

Throughout May 30, FCSO received multiple reports of scam calls impersonating an agency employee. The callers claimed to be Sergeant Miley—a real FCSO employee—and told victims they had an active warrant for their arrest, but that their arrest could be prevented by making a payment.

Through investigative means, Shawn Dufeal, 25, and Jameil LaBennett, 28, were arrested outside the Flagler County Government Center in connection with the fraud scheme. Dufeal faces charges of Scheme to Defraud – False Pretenses (Over \$750), Grand Theft – Pickpocketing (\$5K – 10K), and Fraudulent Use of Identification without Consent (Vic. Public Servant). LaBennett faces charges of Scheme to Defraud – False Pretenses (Under \$20K), Grand Theft – Pickpocketing (\$5K – \$10K), and Falsely Impersonating a Police Officer.

The investigation is ongoing and additional charges may be added. Anybody who received phone calls on May 30 from a caller claiming to be "Sgt. Miley" are asked to contact the FCSO Communications Center by calling 386-313-4911.

"If you received a phone call by someone claiming to be a Sheriff's Office employee, specifically claiming to be Sgt. Miley, I encourage you to contact us and file a report," said Sheriff Rick Staly. "Residents should educate themselves on these schemes as this is an old scam that keeps going around. The Flagler County Sheriff's Office will never call you and ask for money to avoid being arrest. Instead, we will just take you to the Green Roof Inn where you can post a bond if you are truly wanted. If you are called by somebody

claiming to be a Deputy Sheriff and you're not sure of their identity, I encourage you to call our non-emergency number (386-313-4911) to verify their identity before following their directions."

"If you received a call like this yesterday, your information could become valuable evidence in this investigation," added BPD Chief Brannon. "I emphasize that no police officer or Sheriff's Office employee will call you and ask for money, gift cards, cryptocurrency, or any other form of payment to avoid arrest."

###