

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* FLORIDA

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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Florida

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

## **Miami Resident Sentenced to 42 Months' Imprisonment for COVID-19 Relief Fraud**

Miami, Florida – Carlos Vazquez, 57, of Miami, was sentenced yesterday to 42 months' imprisonment for fraudulently obtaining \$921,875 through a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan guaranteed by the Small Business Administration (SBA) under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

On September 13, 2021, Vazquez pleaded guilty in the Southern District of Florida to conspiracy to commit wire fraud. According to court documents, Vazquez obtained a PPP loan worth \$921,875 for his company, Big League LLC. Vazquez admitted that he submitted fraudulent tax documents and false information about the number of employees and average payroll.

On November 16, 2021, the Honorable United States District Court Judge Donald M. Middlebrooks sentenced Vazquez to a term of imprisonment of 42 months, to be followed by a term of supervised release of 3 years. Vazquez was also ordered to pay \$921,875 in restitution.

U.S. Attorney Juan Antonio Gonzalez of the Southern District of Florida and Special Agent in Charge Matthew D. Line of the IRS-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) Miami Field Office made the announcement.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Hayden Patrick O'Byrne of the Southern District of Florida prosecuted the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Annika Miranda of the Southern District of Florida handled asset forfeiture. The IRS-CI investigated the case.

The Fraud Section leads the department's prosecution of fraud schemes that exploit the PPP. Since the PPP began, Fraud Section attorneys have prosecuted more than 100 defendants in more than 70 criminal cases. The Fraud Section has also seized more than \$65 million in cash proceeds derived from fraudulently obtained PPP funds, as well as numerous real estate properties and luxury items purchased with such proceeds. More information can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-fraud/ppp-fraud>.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies

tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at [www.flsd.uscourts.gov](http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov) or at <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>, under case number 21-cr-20231.

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**Topic(s):**

Coronavirus

Disaster Fraud

**Component(s):**

USAO - Florida, Southern

**Contact:**

Marlene Rodriguez

Special Counsel to the U.S. Attorney

Public Affairs Officer

USAFLS.News@usdoj.gov

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