



RICHARD A. BROWN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
QUEENS COUNTY**
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568
718-286-6000

Release # 106-2017
www.queensda.org
[twitter@QueensDABrown](https://twitter.com/QueensDABrown)

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CONTACT: QDA (718-286-6315)
DFS (212-709-1690)

**MOONLIGHTING QUEENS PARALEGAL CHARGED WITH STEALING \$80,000
FROM CLIENTS OF JACKSON HEIGHTS LAW FIRM THAT EMPLOYED HIM**

Defendant Allegedly Told Victims He Could Help With Mortgage Loan Modifications

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown, joined by New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) Superintendent Maria T. Vullo, today announced that a 40-year old paralegal formerly employed at a Jackson Heights law firm has been charged with stealing \$80,000, and attempting to steal an additional \$44,000, by claiming that he could help one of the firm's clients and another homeowner in distress and in danger of foreclosure with loan modifications on their mortgages.

District Attorney Brown said, "Unbeknownst to his employer, the defendant allegedly developed a side business in which he told clients of the law firm that he could help them with modifying mortgage loans on properties that they owned and oftentimes met with them at the law firm. Instead of helping people with their mortgage problems, the defendant is accused of helping himself to their money, stealing tens of thousands of dollars. Even after he was fired from the law firm, he allegedly continued his scheme by meeting with a distressed homeowner at various fast food locations around Queens County."

Superintendent Vullo said, "This defendant allegedly took advantage of his employer, homeowners and senior citizens who believed he could help them. DFS denounces this deplorable behavior and will continue to ensure that the defendant and others who try to deceive people in New York State are held accountable. We applaud the Queens District Attorney and his office for putting a stop to this scheme and bringing this defendant to justice."

Superintendent Vullo noted that homeowners facing foreclosure can find tips and information on the DFS website (www.dfs.ny.gov).

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Hyun Do Kim, also known as Billy Kim, 40, of Whitestone, Queens. Kim was arraigned yesterday before Queens Criminal Court Judge John Zoll on a criminal complaint charging him with the crimes of second- and third-degree grand larceny, first-degree identity theft, third-degree attempted grand larceny, first-degree scheme to defraud and third-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument. Kim, who faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted, was ordered held on \$200,000 bail and to return to court on July 11, 2017.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal charges, Kim was employed as a paralegal at a Jackson Heights law firm between September 2009 and April 2012, and that during this time he told clients of the law firm that he could help them with loan modifications – which was not within the scope of his employment at the law firm.

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In one instance, it is alleged that a client met with Kim for a loan modification on his Flushing property and was told that he should pay Kim with cash on a monthly basis – instead of paying his mortgage – and that Kim would forward the money to the mortgage company as part of the loan modification process.

In furtherance of his alleged scheme, Kim provided the client with copies of the purported checks he sent to the mortgage company as receipts, as well as a receipt written on the law firm's stationery and signed by Kim and stamped in the name of the firm's lawyer. However, a review of those checks allegedly revealed that they were never mailed to the client's mortgage company and that the account from which they had been written was closed in 2009. Additionally, the firm's attorney stated that Kim did not have permission or authority to issue a receipt to the client on the firm's stationery as the firm was not involved in any loan modifications made on behalf of the client and his property. Further investigation allegedly revealed that Kim did not initiate or engage in a loan modification for the client despite having been paid more than \$70,000 by the client between March 2010 and July 2012.

Additionally, it is charged that in September 2015, a 69-year-old homeowner in danger of foreclosure contacted Kim about a loan modification for a property that he owned with his 73-year-old aunt in Bayside, Queens. It is alleged that Kim told the two property owners to make payments to his company, JC Financial of NY, instead of sending payments to their mortgage company and that he would send the monies to the bank as part of the loan modification process. The two property owners allegedly paid Kim more than \$10,000 between September and October 2015 for the loan modification which he never completed for them. It is further alleged that the Bayside house was foreclosed upon during the time the property owners were paying Kim and that the house was sold at auction.

Finally, according to the criminal charges, while the loan modification was purportedly pending on the Bayside property, Kim offered the 69-year-old client assistance with a second Queens house that he owned. It is alleged that Kim provided the client with a fax cover sheet that was purportedly from a Westbury, Long Island, law firm, which acted as a debt collector, and which directed the client to make an initial payment of \$44,000 via certified check to begin the modification process and avoid foreclosure. Suspicious of the fax, the client visited the Westbury law firm and discovered that the document was forged, the name of the law firm was incorrect on the fax sheet, and that the law firm had no dealings with Kim on behalf of the client.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Joseph Laspina, of the Queens District Attorney's Detective Bureau, under the supervision of Sergeant Patrick F. Dolan and Lieutenant John W. Kenna and the overall supervision of Franco Russo, Chief Investigator and Robert J. Burke, Deputy Chief Investigator, and by the New York State Department of Financial Services' Criminal Investigations Unit.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Christine E. Burke, of the District Attorney's Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Kristen A. Kane, Deputy Bureau Chief and Chief of the Elder Frauds Unit, and Gregory C. Pavlides, Economic Crimes Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco.

It should be noted that a complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editor: An e-version of this press release is posted on QDA website at www.queensda.org