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Man Pleads Guilty to Defrauding University of \$12.8 Million to Spend on USVI Webcam Girlfriend, \$400,000 Property

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Ralph Puglisi, age 59, is a former accounting manager for the University of South Florida Medical Services Association

A Florida man has admitted to defrauding his employer of \$12.8 million and using some of his ill gotten gains to lavish his U.S. Virgin Islands webcam girlfriend, including the purchase of a \$400,000 property in the territory.

Ralph Puglisi, age 59, a former accounting manager for the University of South Florida Medical Services Association, pleaded guilty to one count of mail fraud in August 2021. In a recent motion before the court, in which he appealed to be sentenced to less than the maximum of 20 years in jail, Puglisi also claimed that a large portion of the stolen funds went to pay for a “luxurious

lifestyle” for his then-wife, a claim that the ex-wife’s attorney has denied.

Reporting from NBC’s South Florida affiliate [WFLA](#) is that Puglisi began to use his employer’s credit cards to make unauthorized charges to the tune of \$11.8 million altogether. Then, he began to spend the money on a U.S. Virgin Islands woman working through the adult website MyGirlFund as a webcam performer, who he claims manipulated him into thinking that they were enjoying a legitimate extramarital relationship.

Puglisi reportedly spent as much as \$6 million directly on the woman, and spent almost \$11.5 million on the website in general, a sum that, according to the motion, represented “80 percent of all MGF profits for the time period.”

However, when the University of South Florida filed a civil lawsuit against Puglisi earlier this year in an attempt to recover some of the stolen money, a lawyer for MyGirlFund denied the allegation. Scott Rost, MGF’s attorney, issued a statement which read in part, “This allegation by Mr. Puglisi is false and based on no objective data.”

Thus far, Puglisi has reportedly repaid over \$1.2 million in restitution, and has also surrendered his interest in a property he purchased in the Virgin Islands, worth \$400,000. WFLA has calculated that it would take over a thousand years for the remaining funds to be repaid if Puglisi adheres to the minimum required payback amounts listed in the repayment schedule.

Ultimately, Judge William F. Jung sentenced Puglisi to 10 years in federal prison, with 3 years of supervised release post-incarceration. Meanwhile a spokesperson from the University of South Florida says that measures have been put in place to prevent future embezzlement of this magnitude.