

Judge Sends Former VIHFA Executive to Prison in Hurricane Contract Fraud Case

Federal prosecutors proved Darin Richardson manipulated the bid process for a hurricane supplies contract, lied about recusing himself, and diverted construction loan funds, leading to a three-year prison sentence and supervised release.

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Former V.I. Housing Finance Authority Chief Operating Officer Darin Richardson appeared at the District Court in St. Thomas today. By. WTJX.

Former V.I. Housing Finance Authority Chief Operating Officer Darin Richardson was sentenced Wednesday morning to three years in prison for his role in a fraudulent contract involving the storage and management of hurricane supplies, capping a case in which a jury found that he

manipulated the bid process, lied to federal investigators, falsified bank documents, and diverted loan proceeds for an undisclosed property purchase.

Richardson is scheduled to turn himself in to authorities on April 7, and will also serve two years of supervised release following his incarceration.

Judge Mark Kearney imposed the sentence Wednesday morning after Richardson was convicted [earlier this month](#) of criminal conflict of interest, making materially false statements, bank fraud, and money laundering.

According to the case against him, Richardson violated federal regulations by reviewing bids for a VIHFA contract while simultaneously pursuing a business relationship with one of the bidders. He was found to have awarded higher scores to the bidder with whom he was working outside of agency business, and that bidder ultimately received the contract.

Richardson was also found guilty of lying to authorities during the investigation. Prosecutors said he told officials from the Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General that he had recused himself from the contracting process, when that was not true.

In addition to the contract-related offenses, Richardson was convicted of falsifying documents submitted to a local bank while seeking a construction loan. Jurors agreed with prosecutors that he submitted cost estimates he drafted under another company's letterhead in an effort to make them appear legitimate to the bank.

He was also found guilty of illegally diverting loan proceeds toward the purchase of a different property that the bank did not know about.

Richardson was indicted in the [\\$4 million HUD fraud scheme alongside Davidson and Sasha Charlemagne](#). Davidson Charlemagne, the former director of maintenance for the Department of Education, owned and operated one of the companies involved in the winning bid for hurricane relief lumber.

His wife, Sasha Charlemagne, was paid more than \$67,000 from contract funds despite there being no record of her employment with D&S Trucking, her husband's company.

Both Davidson and Sasha Charlemagne are awaiting trial, which is scheduled to begin in mid-July.