

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sayville man to be arraigned on rental scam charges Friday

A Sayville man arrested for posting internet ads for a room rental and then stealing the prospective tenants' rent, security deposit money and personal property has been indicted by a grand jury and is scheduled for arraignment tomorrow in Central Islip, Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota said.

State Supreme Court Justice Fernando Camacho will unseal the indictment of Joseph Fernandez, 26, of 139 Broadway in Sayville. Fifth Precinct Crime Section officers said numerous complaints were filed by would-be renters claiming the defendant refused to respond to them after taking their money. Police charged Fernandez with multiple counts of petit larceny, grand larceny in the fourth degree, and scheme to defraud.

After Fernandez was initially arrested in September, he continued his scheme of stealing the rent, deposit money and property from at least six more apartment seekers, resulting in a second arrest by the SCPD on December 2.

"There is evidence one victim brought tires and wheel rims to Fernandez to store prior to moving in and the defendant promptly posted a Craigslist ad offering them for sale," District Attorney Spota said.

Justice Camacho will call the court calendar in the First District courthouse in C.I. at 9:30 am tomorrow.

Police are asking anyone who believes they may have been a victim of Fernandez and has not yet contacted them to call the **Fifth Precinct Crime Section at 631-854-8527**.

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A criminal charge is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.