

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

RENTAL FRAUD SUSPECT PLEADS NO CONTEST TO FELONY GRAND THEFT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 21, 2017

CONTACT: John F. Hubanks

Deputy District Attorney

(831) 647-7705

Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Veronica Lopez pled no contest to a felony grand theft charge stemming from her use of a phony rental advertisement on the internet site Craigslist which lured 2 people into paying her a rental “deposit”.

The criminal case began on July 12, 2016 when the Salinas Police Department began receiving calls from multiple persons reporting that someone was posing as the owner of a Salinas property and advertising the home “for rent” on Craigslist. Two of the reporting parties claimed that, after reading the advertisement, they had called the advertising party – later identified as Ms. Lopez. They each reported that Ms. Lopez later met with them and represented that the Salinas property could be rented for \$1,500 per month, but that she would require an up-front “deposit”. One party paid \$1000 to Ms. Lopez. After later becoming suspicious, each of the parties independently verified that Ms. Lopez did not own the property in question and that the property was not for rent. At that point, they contacted the Salinas Police Department.

Veronica Lopez will be sentenced on September 19, 2017.

The case was handled by Deputy District Attorney John Hubanks from the District Attorney’s Real Estate Fraud Unit, along with District Attorney Investigator Alicia Cox.