



**TIMOTHY J. CRUZ**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

# *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

## **PLYMOUTH DISTRICT**

### **OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

MAIN OFFICE:  
166 MAIN STREET  
BROCKTON, MA 02301  
TEL: (508) 584-8120

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT: BETH STONE**  
**(508) 584-8120**

### **REAL ESTATE BROKER SENTENCED TO STATE PRISON AFTER STEALING FROM CLIENTS AND AGENTS**

*Broker diverted millions in escrow funds, left victims unpaid when business abruptly collapsed*

**BROCKTON** – A Massachusetts real estate broker who diverted millions of dollars in escrow funds, falsified financial records, and left clients and agents reeling when his business abruptly shut down, has been sentenced to state prison, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

Today in Plymouth Superior Court, Stephen Webster, 63, pleaded guilty to Embezzlement by a Fiduciary, Larceny Over \$1,200 Pursuant to a Single Scheme, Witness Intimidation, and Publishing a False Financial Statement. Judge Daniel O’Shea sentenced Webster to serve 2–3 years in state prison, followed by five years of probation. As conditions of probation Webster may not hold a position of fiduciary responsibility without prior court approval and must pay restitution. The Commonwealth had recommended a sentence of 6–8 years in state prison.

Webster was the longtime broker and principal of Success! Real Estate, Inc., a company that operated for decades across southeastern Massachusetts before abruptly shutting its doors in December 2024.

A months-long investigation by law enforcement uncovered a sweeping pattern of financial misconduct. A review of South Shore Bank and Rockland Trust records, accounting ledgers, and witness interviews showed that between 2023 and 2024 Webster routinely — often on a near-daily basis — moved money out of designated escrow accounts and into his personal and business accounts. Investigators determined that over that period Webster transferred approximately \$11 million in funds earmarked for escrow.

According to investigators, those diverted funds were used to pay credit card debt, business loans, and personal expenses, including monthly rent of approximately \$10,000, and gambling-related expenditures in Massachusetts and Florida.

Investigators further found that, in March 2023, after the Massachusetts Department of Licensure indicated that it intended to audit the company’s escrow accounts and requested documentation of the funds being held by Success! Real Estate, Webster omitted one escrow account



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entirely and submitted false financial documentation to the agency. That documentation included a forged letter purportedly from South Shore Bank representing that his sole escrow account held more than \$1 million in client funds. Those actions hindered any further review by the agency.

When Success! Real Estate abruptly closed in December 2024, the fallout was immediate. Employees and agents were left without expected commission payments, and clients in pending real estate transactions were left wondering what had happened to deposits being held in escrow. The sudden collapse exposed the scope of the company's unresolved financial obligations and the damage done to people who had entrusted Webster with their money and livelihoods.

After an arrest warrant issued, Webster was entered into a national database. Cooperation among Massachusetts law enforcement agencies, the Massachusetts State Police, and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office in Florida led to Webster's arrest in Palm Beach County in September 2025. He was later indicted by a grand jury.

At today's hearing, numerous victims appeared in court, both in person and via Zoom. Several had also submitted letters to the court describing the financial and professional harm they suffered.

"Stephen Webster treated client escrow money like it was his own personal bankroll," DA Cruz said. "He did not just steal money — he shattered trust, destabilized transactions, and left hardworking people to deal with the fallout. This sentence holds him accountable for a scheme that caused real financial and personal harm."

Assistant District Attorney Alex Zane prosecuted the case. The investigation was conducted by Marshfield Police Detective Greg Davis, and Hanover Police Detective Steve Moar.