

**For Immediate Release**  
Dec. 13, 2019

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## **Franklin County Man Pleads Guilty to Securities Fraud and Grand Theft**

*Crimes included securities fraud of \$250,000 from an Ohio investor*

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – Benson Jean-Louis, 35, pleaded guilty to one count of grand theft, a fourth-degree felony, and one count of securities fraud, a third-degree felony, during a hearing Thursday in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas.

Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 7, 2020.

Following a criminal referral by the Ohio Division of Securities, Jean-Louis, a Haitian citizen and Franklin County resident, was indicted in September 2018 by a Franklin County grand jury on one count of misrepresentation in the sale of securities and one count of securities fraud, both first-degree felonies, and one count of theft, a fourth-degree felony.

The indictment alleged from November 2015 through Dec. 31, 2015, Jean-Louis solicited an individual to invest \$250,000 with him in a trading platform based on false information about Jean-Louis' experience and securities licensure. The indictment further alleged Jean-Louis misappropriated a portion of the investment funds for his own use. Jean-Louis did not hold any securities license in Ohio.

This case was prosecuted by the Office of the Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien and presented by Robert Lang, assistant prosecuting attorney.

Before investing, the Division of Securities encourages potential investors to call the Division's Investor Protection Hotline at 877-683-7841 to ask:

- Is the brokerage firm and salesperson licensed to sell securities in Ohio?
- Have any enforcement actions been taken against them?
- Has the security been properly registered with the Division of Securities?

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