



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Suburban Man Charged with Fraud in Connection with Ponzi-Type Scheme That Swindled Elderly Investors

CHICAGO — A north suburban man defrauded more than a dozen clients, some of whom were elderly and had pledged their retirement savings, in a Ponzi-type scheme that netted him at least \$1 million, according to a criminal complaint filed in federal court in Chicago.

RICHARD K. BOOY, the founder of Principal Financial Strategies LLC and the now-defunct Safe Financial Strategies Inc., used the promise of no-risk investments and guaranteed returns to persuade at least 15 clients to hand over at least \$1 million, the complaint states. Although Booy claimed to be affiliated with the widely known investment firm Principal Financial Group, he had no actual relationship with the firm and was not authorized to invest client funds with it. Instead of investing the funds as promised to clients, Booy used the victims' money to cover personal expenses, including credit card debt and purchases at Best Buy and DirecTV, and to pay earlier investors through Ponzi-type payments, the complaint states.

The complaint was filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Chicago. It charges Booy, 48, of Vernon Hills, with one count of mail fraud. He is scheduled to make an initial appearance today at 3:00 p.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge M. David Weisman.

The complaint was announced by Zachary T. Fardon, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; E.C. Woodson, Inspector-in-Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Chicago; Jeffrey A. Monhart, Regional Director of the Chicago Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration; and Tanya Solov, Director of the Illinois Securities Department of the Illinois Secretary of State.

The complaint alleges that the fraud scheme began in approximately June 2014 and remained ongoing as of this month. Most of Booy's victims are elderly, and some paid him their entire life savings or funds from retirement accounts, the complaint states. The victims include a Chicago pastor, a retired painter, a retired government worker, and an individual who suffers from Parkinson's Disease. Booy often met personally with the victims in their homes, misrepresenting to them that their investments were guaranteed to return a profit, the complaint states.

Booy continued his investment scheme even after Principal Financial Group in September obtained a temporary restraining order against him that led to a court-authorized seizure of his computer and other evidence from Booy's home, according to the complaint.

The public is reminded that a complaint contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Mail fraud carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. If convicted, the court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal sentencing statutes and the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew Ebert.

Attachment(s):

[Download Complaint](#)

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - Illinois, Northern](#)

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