

How Paying Restitution Can Help You Avoid Incarceration from Wire Fraud Charges

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According to the [Associated Press](#), a Houston minister is accused of [misusing a loan](#) given to him to build a church in Indianapolis. Rev. Wayne Taft Harris Jr. allegedly borrowed \$482,000 in August 2005 from Third World Missions of Merritt Island, Fla., on behalf of Kingdom Builders Faith Church.

Third World manages Bible schools and orphanages in several countries and raises money from the interest on church construction loans.

Harris is accused of using the money to buy a Mercedes Benz and a mink coat with Versace buttons. He allegedly sent a fax to the mission group blaming an unidentified staff member for misappropriating the loan funds.

Harris missed his initial hearing in Indianapolis on Tuesday. By way of miscommunication, he had already turned himself in July 16 to federal authorities in Houston. Harris was released on a \$25,000 bond.

Harris's [criminal defense attorney](#), Michael Donahoe, said Harris wasn't told of the hearing, which has been rescheduled for Aug. 3. Donahoe also said Harris would plead not guilty at the rescheduled hearing.

Harris has been charged with wire fraud.

Wire Fraud

[Wire Fraud](#) is defined as any criminally fraudulent activity that involves electronic communications of any kind, at any phase of the event. The electronic communication adds to the severity of the event.

Wire Fraud that involves a financial institution can result in a maximum fine of \$1,000,000 and imprisonment of 20-30 years.

Wire Fraud Defense

In Florida, most fraud charges involve the Economic Crimes Division (ECD) putting together a great amount of evidence for presentation before a grand jury. The best way to resolve these cases is for your [criminal defense lawyer](#) to have a good working relationship with the prosecutor and to try to avoid any serious consequences by paying restitution.

In Florida, restitution outweighs incarceration, so if your [criminal defense lawyer](#) can persuade the victim to drop charges in favor of receiving their money back, you can usually avoid a conviction.

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