



# Department of Justice

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District of Rhode Island

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Thursday, January 28, 2016  
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## **Landscaping and Nursery Company Executive Pleads Guilty to Orchestrating Schemes to Avoid Paying Union Benefits; Falsify Unemployment Documents**

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Steven F. Pagliarini, 57, Executive Vice-President and Treasurer of Central Landscaping Construction Company, located in Johnston, R.I., and Executive Vice-President of Central Nurseries, Inc., located in Chepachet and Johnston, R.I., pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Providence today to charges that he orchestrated a scheme in which Central Landscaping avoided paying contractually obligated union benefits for employees of two unions who worked on federally-funded projects.

In addition, Pagliarini pleaded guilty to charges that he provided false information to the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (RIDLT) regarding the employment status of some of his Central Nursery employees. Based on the information provided to RIDLT, the employees were paid unemployment compensation they were not entitled to receive.

Pagliarini pleaded guilty to three counts of falsification of documents and one count of wire fraud. He is scheduled to be sentenced on April 15, 2016.

Pagliarini's guilty plea is announced by United States Attorney Peter F. Neronha; Cheryl Garcia, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigation, New York Region; Susan A. Hensley, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration; Todd Damiani, Special Agent in Charge of Region One U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General; Christina D. Scaringi, Special Agent in Charge of the Northeast Region of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General; and Scott Jensen, Director of RIDLT.

Appearing before U.S. District Court Chief Judge William E. Smith, Pagliarini admitted to the court that at various times, between January 2007 and December 2010, he submitted false documents to union welfare and pension plan administrators of two unions that represent construction equipment operators and other employees of Central Landscaping. The documents did not accurately reflect the actual number of hours worked by some employees and the actual amount of wages paid to those employees.

The employees worked on federally-funded projects at the Hartford Park Project in Providence and the I-195 Relocation Project.

Pagliarini also admitted to the court that in a separate scheme, in order to avoid paying wages to some employees between November 2009 through April 2010, he falsely reported to the RIDLT that the employees of Central Nurseries had been laid-off because of a lack of work. Pagliarini admitted to the court that he required the employees to work part-time and he did not pay them. Based on documents filed with RIDLT, employees were paid a total of \$68,487 in unemployment compensation.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Dulce Donovan.

The matter was investigated by the United States Attorney's Office; U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigation; U.S. Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration; U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General; and the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training.

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