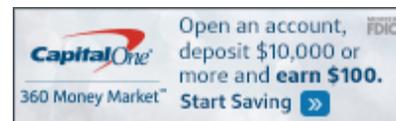


True Crime

# The Coast Guard spent days searching for a man who faked his death. Now he must pay \$1 million.



By Sarah Larimer December 1 at 7:01 AM

On March, 31, 2015, an abandoned boat was discovered in South Florida waters.

The boat was adrift off Lake Worth Inlet, according to plea agreement documents. On board, investigators noticed “several patches of blood.” They found a pair of eyeglasses, which were broken.

The boat had been rented by Richard Winsor Ohrn, records indicated.

The discovery prompted a search-and-rescue effort for Ohrn, which stretched on for days and cost more than \$1 million. Crews from the U.S. Coast Guard used “multiple air and sea assets” in an attempt to find the Florida man.

It was unsuccessful.

But days after he initially went missing, Ohrn resurfaced in Palm Beach County on April 12, 2015, the court documents note. An investigation found that he had been staying in an unfurnished apartment in Albany, Ga., which he had rented under the name of a relative.

Ohrn would admit to faking his disappearance, saying that he “decided to ‘just go away’ due to his anxiety,” the plea agreement documents note. He had towed an inflatable boat behind the other vessel, enabling him to return to shore. He then drove to Georgia, later returning to Florida.

This week, Ohrn was sentenced to one year of probation for faking his own death, [the South Florida Sun-Sentinel reports](#). He'll also pay \$1 million in restitution — but has avoided a stint in prison.

Ohrn pleaded guilty [to communicating a false distress message](#) earlier this year.

“Mr. Ohrn’s actions resulted from several deeply personal crises,” his attorney, Tama Beth Kudman, said in an email to The Post. “So many of us face personal tragedies [that] we don’t feel capable of handling. Mr. Ohrn was faced with several of those crises at once. This case resulted from that confluence of tragic circumstances.”

Here’s [the Sun-Sentinel again](#), with more details of Ohrn’s court appearance before U.S. District Judge Robin Rosenberg:

The judge told Ohrn it was clear that he had not acted out of disrespect for the law. She agreed with prosecutors that the consequences Ohrn faced — being a felon on probation who now owes \$1 million to the government — were sufficient to punish him and deter other people who might consider committing a similar crime.

“Hopefully, the worst is behind you,” the judge told Ohrn, wishing him good luck at successfully completing probation.

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The Sun-Sentinel also detailed some of the personal issues Ohrn was struggling with around the time of the staged disappearance.

According to the newspaper, the former bank financial adviser was dealing with mental health issues connected to prior abuse from his childhood. Additionally, the Sun-Sentinel this week [wrote that](#) attorneys say Ohrn’s crisis was “brought on by mounting personal problems,” which included his wife’s health issues, another relative’s drug addiction problem and financial woes.

“It takes time to move on from something like this,” Kudman said in her email when asked how Ohrn is now. “But he is, of course, looking forward to moving forward.”

NBC News, citing the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office, reported that Ohrn [was in the midst of legal trouble](#) and had been accused of stealing from clients. An August report in the Sun-Sentinel [also noted allegations](#) against Ohrn. Charges weren’t filed against him, the Sun-Sentinel reported, but he was fired in 2012.

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