



March 6, 2015

## Judge Orders Deed Documents Solicitor to Refund Iowans, Cease Solicitations and Pay \$25,000

California-based “Record Transfer Services” owner solicited Iowans after previously agreeing to a ban

(DES MOINES, Iowa) A Polk County judge today [ordered](#) a California company behind government look-alike property record mailings to provide refunds to Iowans and to pay \$25,000 to the state.

District Court Judge Karen A. Romano ordered Record Transfer Services LLC, of Westlake Village, and company owner Neil L. Camenker, 56, of Camarillo, California, to stop soliciting Iowa residents for payment for property deed records or any other government records.

The order, called a consent judgment, also requires the defendants to refund any Iowan who incurred losses, and to pay \$25,000 for future consumer fraud actions and litigation costs. The consent judgment resolves a [consumer fraud lawsuit](#) filed in January by Attorney General Tom Miller.

Miller’s lawsuit alleged that the company sent official-looking “Recorded Deed Notices” to Iowans, claiming they needed a copy of their deed as “legal evidence of ownership.” Homeowners who responded were charged an \$83 “document fee” or “processing fee” for the service.

According to Miller, homeowners do not generally need to have such records on hand, and in any event could obtain them from a local county recorder’s website or office at little or no charge. While the mailings contained disclaimers that the company was not a governmental entity, Miller alleged the overall design was to trick consumers into making what appeared to be mandated payments.

The lawsuit also alleged that Camenker violated a [2011 signed agreement](#) with the Consumer Protection Division, called an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance, which prohibited him or his businesses from soliciting Iowa

residents for deeds or other government records. The 2011 ban was the result of lowans' complaints that "State Record Retrieval Board," another Camenker operation, used official-looking mailings to get Iowa residents to pay \$87 for "deed retrieval services."

"It's bad enough that someone victimized lowans with these misleading mailings," Miller said. "But given that the same person behind them did the same thing in 2011, agreed not to do it again, and then defied that agreement is unacceptable," Miller said. "When we sued Neil Camenker and his company two months ago, we said we wanted to send a clear message to him and others who solicit like this to steer clear of Iowa. We sincerely hope that this \$25,000 payment helps send that message."

Miller noted that it's not clear how many mailings the company sent to lowans over the past few months. Only one lowan was known to have lost money, which has been refunded. If other lowans lost money, Miller added, they should contact the Consumer Protection Division, because the court order requires the defendants to provide refunds.

lowans who paid money in response to the Record Transfer Services mailing can file a Consumer Protection Division complaint:

- [www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov](http://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov)
- 515-281-5926
- 1-888-777-4590 (outside the Des Moines area)
- [consumer@iowa.gov](mailto:consumer@iowa.gov)

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