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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**WOMAN FOUND GUILTY OF GRAND THEFT FOR PAYMENTS SHE RECEIVED WHILE  
UNLAWFULLY ACTING AS AN IMMIGRATION CONSULTANT**

**INDIO** – Today, Nov. 28, 2016, a Riverside County judge found a Cathedral City woman guilty of multiple counts of grand theft related to payments she received while unlawfully acting in the capacity of an immigration consultant.

Sara Arcelia Salcido, DOB: 2-5-76, was convicted of six felony counts of grand theft, two misdemeanor counts of petty theft, and one misdemeanor count of unlawfully receiving compensation while acting as an immigration consultant.

The defense waived its right to a jury trial, as did the DA's Office, so Salcido's trial was instead heard only by a judge. After hearing the evidence in the case, Judge John G. Evans found Salcido guilty of all counts.

Salcido is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 20, 2017, at 9 a.m. in Dept. 2F at the Larson Justice Center in Indio. She faces a potential maximum sentence of up to five years, four months in county jail.

In May 2015, the DA's Office began an investigation after receiving a consumer complaint regarding Salcido's business practices. Salcido is not licensed to practice law in California and the investigation revealed that she is not a registered immigration consultant and had not complied with state requirements before providing such services. Based on evidence obtained during the investigation, Salcido had been taking payments for services she was not lawfully permitted to provide. It is believed these illegal activities had been going on for several years. Based on the evidence, the theft by false pretenses received by Salcido in this case may be in excess of \$500,000. DA's investigators arrested Salcido on Aug. 27, 2015, at her Cathedral City home. Investigators served search warrants at that location as well as at her business, Immigration and Court Services of the Desert, 68-783 E. Palm Canyon Dr. in Cathedral City.

Under the California Business and Professions Code, people are permitted to serve as a paid immigration consultant allowing them to provide services such as obtaining and filling out documents – including U visas, translating answers for documents, and assisting in the filing of documents. Immigration consultants – who are not lawyers and cannot give legal advice -- have a variety of requirements they must follow which include registering with the California Secretary of State, passing a background check, and being properly bonded. For information about immigration consultants, go to [https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/immigration\\_consultants](https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/immigration_consultants)

The case, INF1501474, was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Bryan Boutwell of the DA's Consumer Protection Team.

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