



## FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

### PROTECTING AMERICA'S CONSUMERS

# At FTC's Request, Court Finalizes Orders and Monetary Judgments against Ringleaders of the Sanctuary Belize Real Estate Investment Scheme

January 21, 2021

## Andris Pukke, Peter Baker Ordered to Pay \$120.2 Million

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A federal district court entered final orders against the three primary individual defendants—Andris Pukke, Peter Baker, and Luke Chadwick, and related corporations—in the Federal Trade Commission's case involving the allegedly deceptive sale of real estate properties in Belize to U.S. consumers.

The orders announced today finalize a [September 2020 memorandum opinion](#) requiring Pukke and Baker jointly to pay \$120.2 million to the Commission—representing the amount of money consumers lost through the Sanctuary Belize real estate development scheme—with Chadwick also jointly responsible for \$91.9 million of that amount. The FTC plans to use the money collected to provide refunds to defrauded consumers.

The court's final order against Pukke, Baker, and Chadwick also bans Pukke from selling or assisting others in selling most real estate, and ban all three defendants from any involvement with Sanctuary Belize or related entities in the future. The order also bans the three defendants from telemarketing and prohibits them from making misrepresentations to consumers.

According to the FTC, Pukke, Baker, and Chadwick controlled, or illegally benefitted from, [the deceptive marketing of the Sanctuary Belize real estate development](#) in remote southern Belize. In November 2018, the FTC filed a complaint alleging the three individuals, along with dozens of other corporate and individual defendants, deceived U.S. consumers regarding the amenities that the development would have, how soon it would be completed, and the ability to re-sell lots.

The court also entered a final default order and monetary judgment against defendants John Usher, 14 corporate entities, and the estate of Andris Pukke's father, John Pukke. The default order bans these defendants from most real estate sales; permanently bans them from telemarketing; prohibits them from making misrepresentations to consumers; and

imposes financial judgments of \$120.2 million against Usher and the corporate entities, and \$830,000 against the estate of John Pukke.

Lastly, the court issued a final contempt order holding defendants Pukke, Baker, and Usher in contempt of court for violating a prior court order prohibiting them from making misrepresentations while telemarketing. The court also determined that Pukke failed to comply with the monetary relief provisions of an [earlier FTC case in which he was involved, called AmeriDebt](#). The final contempt order enters a \$172 million AmeriDebt judgment against Pukke, and a separate \$120.2 million judgment against the three defendants.

The Federal Trade Commission works to promote competition and to [protect and educate consumers](#). You can [learn more about consumer topics](#) and report scams, fraud, and bad business practices online at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#). Like the FTC on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), get [consumer alerts](#), read our [blogs](#), and [subscribe to press releases](#) for the latest FTC news and resources.

#### **PRESS RELEASE REFERENCE:**

[Ten Individual and Corporate Defendants Settle FTC Charges that They Participated in, Controlled, or Benefitted from the Sanctuary Belize Real Estate Scam](#)

[Statement of FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection Director Andrew Smith on the Memorandum Opinion Issued by U.S. District Court Judge Peter J. Messitte in the Matter of In re Sanctuary Belize Litigation](#)

[Belizean Bank to Pay \\$23 Million and Cease Operations to Settle FTC Charges It Provided Substantial Assistance to the Sanctuary Belize Real Estate Scam](#)

[At FTC's Request, Court Halts Massive "Sanctuary Belize" Real Estate Investment Scam](#)

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