



## ST. PETERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

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The St. Petersburg Police Department has a long history working with the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS). Our agency has maintained a Task Force Officer (K9) with the Drug Interdiction Unit for the past two decades. This partnership became even stronger when we were approached about joining the USPIS- Financial Crimes Task Force in 2023.

Here is a timeline of our participation in this initiative: July 2023 - USPIS Tampa Division reached out to SPPD requesting a partnership with their newly developed USPIS Tampa Bay Financial Crimes Task Force. It was determined that a member of SPPD needed to join the task force to counter the increase in check fraud stemming from intercepted U.S. Postal Service mail.

August 2023 – Detective Daniel Nettleton was selected to join the USPIS Tampa Bay Financial Crimes Task Force as their first local officer/deputy Task Force Officer.

February 2024 – Nettleton completed the USPIS TFO course and started full-time as a USPIS Tampa Bay Financial Crimes Task Force Officer. As part of his assignment, he was tasked with investigating all check fraud cases stemming from intercepted US postal Service mail, along with any postal thefts from USPS bicycles, vehicles, and facilities within St. Petersburg city limits. He was also responsible for investigating federal cases in the Tampa Bay area. Within a few months, Detective Nettleton identified two (2) suspects working separately, stealing US postal Service mail from blue USPS post office boxes within St. Petersburg city limits. Following an extensive investigation, a suspect was arrested in June 2024 on local charges, which subsequently led to federal charges being filed. Federal charges are pending for the other suspect.



A NATIONAL AND STATE ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

As a result of the June 2024 arrest, there was an immediate reduction in check fraud cases reported to SPPD. Unfortunately, it's difficult to determine the exact reduction in check fraud cases related to postal theft; however, the overall number of check fraud cases reported to our agency was nearly cut in half. See the numbers below.

### **Reported Check Fraud Cases (SPPD) Florida State Statutes 831.07, 831.09, and 831.11**

June 2023 – June 2024: 256 cases

June 2024 – June 2025: 134 cases.

Additionally, in 2024, Detective Nettleton initiated an investigation into the suspected theft of Election Mail, requiring special approval from the DOJ Public Integrity Unit (PIN) in Washington, D.C., to assign the case to the local U.S. Attorney's Office. The suspect was arrested on local charges and federal charges are pending.

Detective Nettleton's USPIS Tampa Financial Crimes Task Force supervisor, Postal Inspector/Team Leader Tom Sylvester, sent a letter of commendation in November 2024, which highlighted the above cases and identified Detective Nettleton as a valued member of the task force. He was fortunate to have Detective Nettleton and his expertise.

