

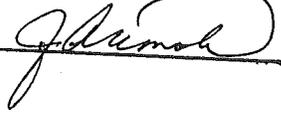
1 Bureau of Real Estate
2 320 West Fourth Street, Ste. 350
3 Los Angeles, California 90013

4 Telephone: (213) 576-6982

FILED

MAR 26 2014

BUREAU OF REAL ESTATE

By 

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8 BUREAU OF REAL ESTATE

9 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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11 To:) No. H-39373 LA
12)
13 FIRST STEP RENTALS,)
14 RAYMOND ANTHONY FUENTES,)
RICHARD ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ,)
and ELLA STEWART.)
(B&P Code Section 10086)

15 The Commissioner ("Commissioner") of the California Bureau of Real Estate
16 ("Bureau") caused an investigation to be made of the activities of FIRST STEP RENTALS,
17 RAYMOND ANTHONY FUENTES, RICHARD ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ, and ELLA
18 STEWART (collectively "Respondents") and has determined that each of them engaged in or is
19 engaging in acts or practices constituting violations of the California Business and Professions
20 Code ("Code") including engaging in the business of a prepaid rental listing service ("PRLS") in
21 the State of California within the meaning of Code Section 10167.2 (unlawful to engage in
22 prepaid rental listing service unless licensed in that capacity or a real estate broker). Based on
23 the findings of that investigation, as set forth below, the Commissioner hereby issues the
24 following Findings of Fact and Desist and Refrain Order pursuant to Code Section 10086.

1 effort to hide RODRIGUEZ's involvement and actual control of the operations.

2 6. On February 12, 2014, the Commissioner issued a Decision in Case No.
3 H-38782 LA which barred RODRIGUEZ for a period of 36 months from engaging in any of the
4 following activities in the State of California: (a) holding any position of employment,
5 management, or control in a real estate business or PRLS business; (b) participating in any
6 business activity of a real estate salesperson or a real estate broker; (c) engaging in any real
7 estate related business activity on the premises where a PRLS, areal estate salesperson or real
8 estate broker is conducting business; and (d) participating in any real estate related business
9 activity of a finance lender, residential mortgage lender, bank, credit union, escrow company,
10 title company, or underwritten title company.

11 7. FUENTES and RODRIGUEZ are conducting unlicensed PRLS activities
12 under the fictitious business name, FIRST STEP RENTALS. STEWART is an employee or
13 independent contractor acting as an administrative assistant for FIRST STEP RENTALS.

14 8. On October 31, 2012, FUENTES filed, or caused to be filed, a fictitious
15 business name statement for FIRST STEP RENTALS with the Orange County Clerk-Recorder's
16 office. The principal place of business for FIRST STEP RENTALS is listed as 1002 E. 17th
17 Street, Suite K, Santa Ana, California 92701. FUENTES is listed as the sole proprietor of FIRST
18 STEP RENTALS. RODRIGUEZ once again has deliberately concealed his involvement and
19 control of the operation.

20 9. While doing business as First Step Rentals, Respondents have charged and
21 collected advance fees averaging \$200 for PRLS services from several prospective tenants
22 including, but not limited to, Raquel P., Sonia L., Ai S., Scott P., and Ludivina V. These
23 prospective tenants were induced to sign written contracts which were never submitted to the
24 Bureau for prior approval. The contracts failed to meet the requirements of Business and

1 Professions Code sections 10167.9, 10167.95, and 10167.10. In exchange for the \$200 fee paid
2 by the prospective tenants, Respondents provided lists of rental properties that were supposed to
3 meet the tenants' specifications for a rental property. The tenants received lists from
4 Respondents which included properties that did not exist, were not available for rent, that were
5 not as described on the list, that misstated the actual monthly rent, or whose owners had not
6 authorized First Step Rental to solicit prospective tenants on their behalf. The prospective
7 tenants requested refunds after discovering that they had not received the services promised by
8 First Step Rentals. Respondents acted in bad faith by refusing to refund any amount to the
9 prospective tenants.

10 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

11 1. The supplying of prospective tenants with listings of residential real
12 properties for tenancy, for a fee in advance of or contemporaneously with the supplying of the
13 listings, is an act for which a Prepaid Rental Listing Service license is required as set forth in
14 Code Section 10167.2 (unlawful to engage in prepaid rental listing service unless licensed in
15 that capacity or a real estate broker).

16 2. Based on the information contained above in Findings of Fact, paragraphs 1
17 through 9, above, Respondents performed and/or participated in prepaid rental listing services
18 which require a prepaid rental listing service license or real estate broker license under the
19 provisions of Code Section 10167.2 during a period of time when none of them were licensed
20 by the Bureau as a real estate broker or prepaid rental listing service in violation of Section
21 Code 10167.2.

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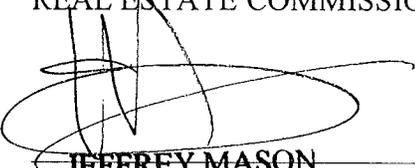
DESIST AND REFRAIN ORDER

Based on the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law stated herein:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that FIRST STEP RENTALS, RAYMOND ANTHONY FUENTES, RICHARD ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ, and ELLA STEWART, whether doing business under their own names, or any other names, or any fictitious name, immediately desist and refrain from engaging in business as a prepaid rental listing service, individually and under any fictitious business name, unless and until you obtain the required license from the Bureau and are in compliance with Business and Professions Code Section 10167.2.

DATED: March 24, 2014.

REAL ESTATE COMMISSIONER



JEFFREY MASON
Chief Deputy Commissioner

First Step Rentals, Raymond Anthony Fuentes, Richard Anthony Rodriguez, and Ella Stewart
1002 E. 17th Street, Suite K
Santa Ana, California 92701