

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

# Sergio Pino denies involvement in alleged arson, hit-and-run threats against wife

BY JAY WEAVER

UPDATED JULY 01, 2024 5:34 PM



Sergio Pino, the president, CEO and founder of Century Homebuilders Group, at the company's Midtown Doral residential complex sales center in August. PATRICK FARRELL [pfarrell@miamiherald.com](mailto:pfarrell@miamiherald.com)

**READ MORE**

FBI investigating Sergio Pino

FBI agents raided the residence the well-known home builder as part of a investigation into his alleged connection to threats against his wife Tatiana Pino's life. The pair are in a divorce dispute.

## EXPAND ALL

---

In August of last year, the estranged wife of home builder Sergio Pino reported to the police that a Home Depot flatbed truck driving in reverse rammed into the passenger side of her dark blue BMW as she was pulling into the driveway of her Pinecrest home in broad daylight.

Investigators do not believe the crash was an accident. The rented truck, which had no rear license plate, sped off after the hit-and-run, according to a video surveillance system at Tatiana Pino's home.

“It was apparent that this was an intentional act and not an accidental collision,” according to an FBI affidavit for a criminal complaint charging Bayron Bennett, a part-time employee of Sergio Pino, in March of this year. Court records show Bennett told investigators he was asked to recruit individuals to commit crimes against Tatiana Pino, though the documents do not state if Bennett gave a name.

FBI agents are investigating whether Sergio Pino hired Bennett to recruit a crew of men to threaten his wife's life in the wake of her filing for divorce from him in April 2022, people familiar with the FBI probe told the Miami Herald. Although the FBI affidavit doesn't identify Sergio Pino or his wife Tatiana by name, Bennett is described as “hired help” who put together food and beverage services for the home builder for excursions on his yacht.

Bennett and three other Miami-Dade men — Michael Dulfo, Edner Etienne and Jerren Howard — have been charged with stalking Pino's wife in connection with the hit-and-run at her home. Bennett, Dulfo and Howard are also charged with a racketeering-related offense and arson targeting three vehicles belonging to Tatiana Pino's sister.

With “the intent to kill, injure and intimidate,” the four men conspired “to engage in a course of conduct that placed” Tatiana Pino, along with her sister, “in

reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury,” an indictment states. The men are accused of carrying out the conspiracy between June 2022 and March 2024 by using cell phones and being paid via Cash App, the indictment says.

The four defendants have pleaded not guilty and are facing trial in Miami federal court in late August. Their defense attorneys either did not respond to Herald inquiries or declined to comment.

Sergio Pino's defense attorney, Sam Rabin, said they're aware of the prosecutions of the four men and the ongoing investigation by the FBI, which raided the builder's waterfront home and business in Coral Gables on Monday night.

“We are cooperating fully with the authorities,” Rabin said.

**[READ MORE: FBI investigating developer Sergio Pino's possible link to threats against wife's life](#)**

According to the FBI affidavit, Etienne was the driver of the rented Home Depot flatbed truck that struck Tatiana Pino's BMW on Aug. 30, 2023, and Dulfo followed her car to the Pinecrest home in a dark-colored 2019 Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck that same day. The pair allegedly coordinated the rental of the flatbed truck at the Home Depot in Coconut Grove.

In a November 2023 deposition taken in his divorce case, Sergio Pino denied knowing anything about the flatbed-truck attack on his wife's car in her driveway.

“Did you have anything to do with that?” Tatiana Pino's lawyer, Raymond Rafool, asked him.

“No, of course not. No, I don't do those things,” Sergio Pino said under oath. “What would I have to do with that? What are you insinuating?”

The FBI affidavit also focuses on two arson incidents on July 2, 2022, and Aug. 12, 2023, implicating Bennett, Dulfo and Howard. But the target of the arson attacks

was not Sergio Pino's wife Tatiana; it was the wife's sister, the affidavit says.

The middle-of-night attacks destroyed three cars — a 2019 Dodge Ram, a 2019 Chevrolet Tahoe and a 2019 Chevrolet Silverado — belonging to Tatiana's sister and her husband, who live in Miami-Dade County.

**READ MORE:** [Developer Sergio Pino's wife accused him of poisoning her, divorce records show](#)

Home security cameras captured two of the couple's trucks being set on fire in the July attack by a suspect wearing a hooded sweatshirt and shorts, and also showed the third truck being torched in the August assault by a suspect fleeing the area. In the latter arson attack, video surveillance showed a 2019 Chevrolet Silverado similar to Dulfo's pickup truck near the couple's residence. Miami police and fire rescue responded to both arson incidents.

In March of this year, FBI agents approached Bennett for questioning before his arrest.

“Bennett proceeded to tell law enforcement that he was asked to seek out individuals to commit arsons and a hit-and-run against VICTIM 1,” the affidavit says. [The Herald has learned that VICTIM 1 is Sergio Pino's wife Tatiana.]

“Bennett identified Dulfo as the person he solicited to commit the arsons and hit-and-run,” adding that he had known Dulfo for a long time.

Dulfo's defense attorney, Paul Donnelly, declined to comment about the allegations on Friday.

In his deposition in the divorce case, Sergio Pino was asked who might have lit the sister's trucks on fire.

“I don't have any idea,” he testified, though he acknowledged hearing about the arson attacks. Asked if he had anything to with them, he said: “No, of course not.”

Then, without prompting, Pino said his white BMW 750 was torched on Sept. 7, 2023, in front of an apartment building at 850 NW 43rd Ave. near Le Jeune Road. He said he was meeting at the building with other executives from his real estate company, Century.

“My car was put on fire,” Pino declared.

“Did you report it to the police?” asked Rafool, his wife’s lawyer.

“Of course,” Pino said. “I have pictures to show you.”

**READ THE DOCUMENTS: FBI affidavits detail alleged threats against developer’s wife**

This story was originally published June 29, 2024, 5:30 AM.

## Weekly Rewind

A weekly recap of the top stories affecting South Floridians, in your inbox every Saturday.

By submitting, I agree to the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).



**JAY WEAVER**



305-376-3446

Jay Weaver writes about federal crime at the crossroads of South Florida and Latin America. Since joining the Miami Herald in 1999, he’s covered the federal courts nonstop, from Elian Gonzalez’s custody battle to Alex Rodriguez’s steroid abuse. He was part of the Herald teams that won the 2001 and 2022 Pulitzer Prizes for breaking news on Elian’s seizure by federal agents and the collapse of a Surfside condo building killing 98 people. He and three Herald colleagues were 2019 Pulitzer Prize finalists for explanatory reporting on gold smuggling between South America and Miami.

# Take Us With You

Real-time updates and all local stories you want right in the palm of your hand.



[MIAMI HERALD APP →](#)

[VIEW NEWSLETTERS →](#)

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

- [Start a Subscription](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [eEdition](#)
- [Vacation Hold](#)
- [Pay Your Bill](#)

## LEARN MORE

- [About Us](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Sports Betting](#)
- [Banking](#)
- [Coupons](#)

## ADVERTISING

- [McClatchy Advertising](#)
- [Place an Ad](#)
- [Place a Classified Ad](#)
- [Place an Ad - Celebrations](#)
- [Place an Obituary](#)
- [Staffing Solutions](#)
- [Political | Advocacy Advertising](#)

Part of the McClatchy Media Network

[COPYRIGHT](#)

[COMMENTING  
POLICY](#)

[PRIVACY  
POLICY](#)

[COOKIE  
PREFERENCES](#)

[YOUR  
PRIVACY  
CHOICES](#)

[TERMS  
OF  
SERVICE](#)