



DenverDA

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SCAM ALERT

Recently, our office has received numerous inquiries from people who have gotten calls from the "State Attorney's Office" or the "Attorney General's Office." The caller threatens to have the person arrested if they don't immediately pay for an old bad check. The "official" or in reality, the scammer, insists on payment through wire

transfer or pre-paid cards. These scammers are so convincing that even when the victim calls our office afterward, they have a hard time believing it isn't true. We assure them there is no warrant and the police aren't on the way to throw them in jail. These scammers are very persistent, calling victims multiple times and are verbally abusive. Often the telephone numbers show TX or FL area codes.

A similar scam was sent to us by a Denver citizen. 'Harry' emailed us after receiving his frightening phone call:

"I just received a very disturbing phone call from 720-316-XXXX.

The caller asked to speak with me; he knew my address and was informing me that there were warrants out for me from the federal jury. He identified himself as Officer Matthew Estey, Badge # 4554 of the Sheriff's Office regarding Warrant Citation FTA 68-0031 and COC 95-101-38. The caller said that I needed to come down to the Federal Court for jury duty today."

Harry's response was very smart, he told the caller that before he did anything, he was going to confirm this information with the Sheriff's Office directly. Bravo Harry! Of course, the scammer knew he was busted by Harry. Unfortunately Harry had to withstand the scammer yelling and using

some "descriptive words" about what he thought about calling the Sheriff . But the language and response only reinforced to Harry that this was a scam.

Harry hung up on the guy, and didn't become a victim. However, he closed his email to us by saying, "My wife witnessed this call and frankly it frightened both of us since he knew our name and address."

Understandably, even knowing that this call was a scam , it's still a scary call to receive.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again, FEAR is the number one tactic that scammers use to make their victims act fast and without thinking through the situation.

If you receive a phone call even remotely similar to the examples above, the best tactic is to HANG-UP. Then report the issue. One thing to note is that many law enforcement agencies, including our office, cannot take action on an *attempted* scam. They are only able to take action if the person is or has become a victim of the scam.

However, the [Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) allows people to report attempted scams. These reports help law enforcement see patterns and trends and get warnings and alerts out to the community before people become actual victims. The complaint process with the [FTC is very easy and accessible to everyone](#). Additional agencies to call include the Denver Sheriff Office: 720-865-0470 or the US Marshal Denver office: 303-355-3400.

If you are still concerned and need assurance that this is merely a scam, call our DA Hotline 720-913-9179. The folks answering this line are experts in assisting with these cases and are very understanding, helpful and know how frightening these calls can be.

The bottom line to remember is: **you will never get a call from the IRS Jury Duty, saying you need to "pay-up" to avoid being arrested.**

Fake IRS Calls May Begin to Wind Down

Police in India say they have arrested 70 call center workers on suspicion of tricking American citizens into sending them money by posing as US tax officials.

A total of 772 workers were arrested early in October in raids on nine fake call centers in a Mumbai suburb, a senior police official told Reuters news agency. An estimated \$36.5 million was extorted from Americans, police said.

Seventy people were placed under formal arrest, 630 were released pending questioning over the coming days. [Read the full story here.](#)

Jamaica Sweepstakes Fraud Targets Older People

(This article was extracted from a story by Steve Baker. October 3, 2016)

Older Americans and Canadians are being clobbered by prize and sweepstakes schemes, with the majority of this fraud coming from Jamaica. Mainly telemarketing schemes, the scammer will pretend to be with Publisher's Clearinghouse or the Mega Millions lottery or the like, telling the victim that they have won several million dollars – but not to tell anyone.

They are promised a free brand new car, usually a Mercedes, which will be delivered later in the afternoon. They are often even asked what color car they want. This is, of course, in addition to the money, which the fraudsters promise will be delivered the next day. While the victim is contemplating the great things they could do for their friends, families and communities, the caller also notes that money must be sent in advance to cover taxes owed to the IRS, insurance, or some other made up reason. If victims send the money, requests for additional money will continue.

No one ever receives any winnings. And, to make matters worse, the fraudsters also use the information they gather to divert the victim's social security and VA benefits to themselves. Calls will usually continue until the victim has no more money and has borrowed all they money they can.

This fraud is also having a devastating effect on Jamaica itself. There were 1196 murders in Jamaica last year, which authorities there believe are largely the result of rival telemarketing gangs seeking lead lists of potential victims.

[Watch how a couple was caught up in a lottery scam](#)



THINK YOU'VE BEEN SCAMMED?

If you suspect you've been scammed or exploited,
call our
Fraud Hot Line to report it.
720-913-9179

SCHEDULE A SPEAKER

Email me if you would like a Word document version of this newsletter. Interested in learning more about scams happening in Denver? Do you want to know how to protect yourself from identity theft? Maro Casparian is available for speaking engagements to any group or organization. Contact her at:



Maro Casparian

Director Consumer Protection 720-913-9036

Email amc@denverda.org to: Subscribe to this newsletter, schedule a presentation or to send suggestions for the next newsletter.

