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NATURE OF STORY: Scammers claiming to be Sheriff’s Office employees

DETAILS:
Phone scammers are at it again. The Lane County Sheriff’s Office has received several reports from community members who have received calls from scammers pretending to be Sheriff’s Office employees. Scammers are telling community members they have a warrant for their arrest and can pay a fine or fee to clear the warrant. These calls are a scam.

Scammers often ask for payment in the form of gift cards or cash cards to remedy a fictitious warrant for missing jury duty or unpaid parking tickets. The Lane County Sheriff’s Office does not make phone calls to community members regarding warrants and would never ask a community member to purchase “cash cards” to pay fees.

These calls are a scam, and community members should hang up immediately and not engage with the caller. Help us stop these scammers from victimizing others by telling your friends and family about these scam calls so they recognize the call for what it is and hang up.

If you are the victim of a phone scam and have lost money as a result of the scam, please report it to your local law enforcement agency. If you did not lose any money, you do not need to call and report it. Below are some tips to decrease your chances of becoming a phone scam victim:

• If you receive a call that you believe is a scam, STOP, and take a minute to think. If you are still unsure, hang up and call the person back at the publicly listed number for that agency.
• Never provide personal information to callers, including your name, address, or banking information.
• Be aware of callers who are unprofessional, pushy, or use scare tactics such as threatening arrest if payment is not made.
• Callers asking for payment through wire transfer, cash cards such as green dot cards, or other non-trackable methods are signs of a scam. Legitimate government agencies will not ask you to provide payment using these methods.
• Do check the caller’s information. If they claim to be from a law enforcement agency or other governmental agency, call the publicly listed phone number for that agency to verify the caller’s authenticity. Scammers have used the names of actual Sheriff’s Office employees in the past so simply verifying that the agency has someone with that name doesn’t mean it isn’t a scam.

Community members can also report fraud to the Oregon Attorney General’s Consumer Hotline by calling 1-877-877-9392.

Sent by: Sergeant Carrie Carver

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