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Norfolk County Sheriff's Office Warns Residents of Phone Scams Impersonating Law Enforcement

DEDHAM, MA – Norfolk County Sheriff Patrick McDermott warned county residents today that phone scammers have been impersonating local law enforcement, including the Norfolk County Sheriff's Office, in an attempt to fraudulently steal funds from residents.

"Residents should remain vigilant when they receive calls asking them for money. The Norfolk County Sheriff's Office and local law enforcement will never call residents and demand payment," said Sheriff McDermott. "We are working closely with local, state, and federal law enforcement to track down these criminals and help keep local residents safe from fraudulent calls."

Scammers have recently started identifying themselves on the phone as officers from local law enforcement, including the Sheriff's Office, even using the names of actual officers in those departments in an attempt to con callers out of funds. They may attempt to instill fear in recipients by claiming there is a warrant for their arrest, unpaid fines, or that a relative has been arrested and needs money to be released.

"If you ever receive a call from someone claiming to be the Sheriff's Office or another law enforcement agency, it is okay to hang up and call that agency directly, even if the caller ID appears to be legitimate," said Sheriff McDermott. "If it's a legitimate call, we won't be upset if you take precautions to confirm our identity, but remember that we will never demand payment for anything over the phone."

The Norfolk County Sheriff's Office shared tips for identifying and avoiding fraudulent scam calls:

- Scam callers often try to instill a sense of urgency so that the recipient feels that they have to act quickly and not think too much about the validity of the call. Hanging up and looking up the correct number for the law enforcement office the caller claims to be from (instead of relying on the number that appears on caller ID) is a good way to confirm the identity of the caller.
- Scammers will frequently demand payment in difficult-to-trace ways, such as cash left in a local locker, gift cards, Bitcoin transfers, or more.
- Scammers will sometimes target families and pretend to be an officer who has arrested a relative,

such as a grandchild or will pretend to be the relative. If you receive a call from a relative in distress who is asking for money, hang up and call that relative directly to confirm.

The Norfolk County Sheriff's Office encourages residents to report any suspicious or scam calls to their local police department. This helps local law enforcement track the rate and frequency of calls and identify common tactics and strategies scammers may be adopting.

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