



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Conserving the Peace Through Values Driven Service
Sheriff Pat Garrett

PRESS RELEASE

Sheriff's Deputies Warn of Law Enforcement Scam

April 15, 2015—The Washington County Sheriff's Office and local police agencies have received complaints from the public concerning a warrant payment scam. The person would ask for a payoff to avoid arresting the person that supposedly had the warrant.

The person would call a citizen at random and identify himself as a Washington County Deputy Sheriff and that the citizen currently has a warrant for their arrest. Lately, there have been reports that the person will identify themselves as Sergeant Nathan Johnson from the Washington County Sheriff's Office. The name will change but the scam is the same. Some people reported if they missed the call, the person would leave a message for them to call back at a 503 area code phone number.

The person would tell the victim that they will be arrested if they did not buy a Green Dot prepaid card in a specified amount and pay them to clear the warrant. Once the victim had the card, the person would then arrange a location to meet them and obtain the card. The person would threaten to come to their house and arrest them if they didn't pay.

No law enforcement agency will ever call demanding money to clear a warrant or for any other reason. If a person has a warrant for their arrest, a law enforcement officer is required to take them into custody and not take any type of payment to clear the warrant. We are advising anyone who receives a call like this to report it immediately.

Other local law enforcement agencies have received reports with similar circumstances. This scam is a variation of other incidents where scammers will call or email with the promise of something in exchange for cash, Green Dot prepaid cards, money wires, or any other form of payment that involves urgent payment. These are all considered scams to cheat you out of your money. Prepaid cards are considered as good as cash. Once a person has the secret code located on the back of the card, your money is lost and very difficult to trace.

The Sheriff's Office reminds citizens to never send money in any form to someone you don't personally know. These requests are a concern for law enforcement with individuals attempting to cheat you out of your money with various methods.

Investigators are seeking the public's help regarding similar scam cases. If you have any information, or have recently received a solicitation that seemed suspicious, please call the Washington County Sheriff's Office at (503) 629-0111.