



HANOVER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Several Citizens in Hanover County Become Victims in "Grandma" Scam

During the past few weeks, the Hanover Sheriff's Office has received several reports from citizens who have fallen prey to a phone scam that has resulted in several thousand dollars in loss to them. The scam is targeting older citizens and involves phone calls to their residences. The caller begins with saying "Hi Grandma or Hi Grandpa, I've been arrested and I need bail money to get out of jail. Can you wire the money to me please?" In some cases, another person will then get on the phone claiming to be the defense attorney for the person in jail to verify the information.

Certainly wanting to help their loved ones, these victims have then wired money to the location given only to find that their loved one is not in jail and, by the time they find out, there is no chance to get their money back. If you receive a call such as this, the Sheriff's Office recommends that you ask some questions before deciding to help.

- ✓ First, remember that if you have caller ID, you shouldn't answer calls that are not identifiable or numbers you are not familiar with.
- ✓ Second, when you answer and they respond, don't say their name back to them. Use generic phrases such as "Honey" or other names in order to prevent the caller from now knowing the correct name to use. Then, ask for the person's name and ***insist*** on a response. Do not settle for "but Grandma, it's me" or "it's your favorite grandson/granddaughter" type responses.
- ✓ Third, ask for the phone number they are calling from.
- ✓ Next, get the name of the Police or Sheriff's Department jurisdiction that arrested them and the name of the jail facility where they are located. Look up or call for directory information for those addresses and phone numbers and call them yourself to see if your loved one was really incarcerated before deciding to act.
- ✓ If the caller tells you not to tell their parents about the situation, you should consider this highly suspicious.

If you have received, or know of someone that has received, these types of phone calls, please call the Sheriff's Office to report the incident to assist us in trying to apprehend the subjects involved. For more information on preventive measures, please contact Crime Prevention Specialist Deputy Barry Bland at 804-365-7116 or by e-mail at bwbland@co.hanover.va.us.

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