



Hunterdon County Sheriff's Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hunterdon Sheriff Reminds Residents Of Scams, Reiterates Caution And Fact Checking

Hunterdon County Sheriff Fred W. Brown recently issued a warning regarding an increase in scams related to jury duty, job applications, utility companies, IRS tax related scams and fraud involving social security.

Sheriff Brown said, "A local resident was contacted last week and informed by someone claiming to be from the Sheriff's Office that unless she paid \$1,500 in green dot cards immediately, she would be arrested for failure to report for jury duty in Hunterdon County. Unfortunately, this money is not something that can typically be returned, and in no way was this claim factual.

I would like to reiterate that the Sheriff's Office would never call anyone to demand money as a way to avoid arrest. Jury duty and the courts, utility companies, the IRS and the Office of Social Security would also never call and demand funds over the phone."

Scams such as these have been increasing since the pandemic, but with recent unemployment numbers on the rise, a different kind of scam has seen a huge increase as well.

"With many people seeking employment, stories have been coming into the office about fraudulent job postings. Applications for employment ask for the candidates' personal information, oftentimes including their social security number, home address, and a copy of their driver's license or other form of ID. The information is then used by the perpetrator for illegal purposes.

In other instances, work from home job opportunities are offered online and applicants are sent a check which bounces, but not before they are asked to wire funds for equipment such as a laptop and other supplies, which never arrive," Sheriff Brown continued.

According to a recent Federal Trade Commission (FTC) report, there are over 24,000 complaints with losses totaling more than nineteen million dollars.

The FTC website also mentions that employment scammers will go as far as setting up fake websites with photos of office space and luring claims such as being your own boss and setting your own schedule.

"If it's too good to be true, it probably is. Scammers have become increasingly sophisticated and technology is being used to support their tactics. Demands over the phone for money or cash cards should always be ignored, even if an arrest or warrant is threatened," Sheriff Brown concluded.

The FTC website has information about common scams and how to report a suspected scam. Visit their website for more information and helpful tips: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts>.

Anyone receiving a suspected scam call should contact their local police department to make a report.