



*“Protecting Our Community With  
Exceptional Service”*

## SCAMS



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Scams can affect anyone. To better assist the public, the Oxnard Police Department has put together this list of common scams to help you avoid becoming a victim of this type of crime.

#### **Prepaid Calling Cards:**

- They are sold everywhere: gas stations, newsstands, bodegas, grocery stores, etc. Some cards provide false and deceptive service. Some give consumers fewer minutes than they paid for and add on hidden fees. An average calling card delivers only 60% of the minutes promised, cheating consumers out of \$1 million a day. Many companies advertise in Spanish but the terms and conditions are in English only, if any at all.
- *WHEN PURCHASING A CALLING CARD MAKE SURE THAT THE CARD CLEARLY DISCLOSES EXACTLY HOW MANY MINUTES THE CARD PROVIDES, WHEN THE CARD EXPIRES AND ALL DISCLOSURES SHOULD BE IN THE SAME LANGUAGE AS THE ADVERTISING.*

#### **Phony Government Official:**

- Consumers are easily intimidated by anyone who claims to be a government official. Several calls have been received by the FDA of “officials” calling consumers to purchase discounted prescription drugs. Consumers are asked to wire funds to the Dominican Republic. No medications are ever delivered. A recent scam that occurred in Ventura County: a man approaches several people and represents himself as an Officer from DMV. He tells people that he is promoting the “Cash For Clunkers” and offers them money for their vehicle. The victims agree and sign over the pink slip to their vehicle. He tells the victims that their checks will be sent in the mail by the government.
- *NO GOVERNMENT AGENCY (DMV, IRS, FDA, OR FTC) WILL CALL ASKING FOR MONEY TO BE WIRED TO ANOTHER COUNTY. NO GOVERNMENT AGENCY WILL SOLICIT DOOR TO DOOR.*

#### **Sweepstakes Scam:**

- Victims are contacted by mail or phone. Scammers advise the victim they have won a sweepstakes and provide them with a check for a large amount of money. Scammers direct the victims to cash the check and wire the money back to a given address (usually outside of the U.S.). Scammers indicate the money was sent to assist them in paying the taxes or clearance fees that must be paid before they can receive their money. A few days later the deposited check is identified as fraudulent.
- *NEVER GIVE OUT PERSONAL OR FINANCIAL INFORMATION TO ANYONE OVER THE PHONE, OR BY MAIL. NEVER SEND MONEY TO RECEIVE A PRIZE.*

#### **Credit Card Scam:**

- Uncommon credit card companies targeting the Latino community by advertising on television and radio stations claiming to help those having difficulty sending money to relatives in Mexico. They advise they will help obtain credit cards with limits ranging from \$2,000 to \$7,500. Their ads claim “You do not need to have a Social Security number or need to have good credit history...” They do not reveal that consumers have to pay up to \$400 in advance for the credit cards. The credit cards are good only to buy products purchased from the company’s own catalogs. The cards can’t be used at ATM’s or to transfer funds
- *WHEN APPLYING FOR CREDIT CARDS READ ALL DISCLOSURES AND ASK QUESTIONS. STAY AWAY FROM CREDIT CARD COMPANIES THAT WANT AN ADVANCED PAYMENT FOR THE CARD.*

#### **Family Tragedy and Death Threat Scam:**

- These scams are extremely common. Victims receive a call claiming a relative is in trouble or that a murder contract has been taken out. Often times a “coyote” will call victim advising they have their family hostage when in reality their family is safe in Mexico.
- *DO NOT ATTEMPT TO WIRE THE MONEY OR MEET THE CALLER IN PERSON. CONTACT THE POLICE TO CONFIRM IF A FAMILY MEMBER IS IN DANGER.*

#### **Phony Driver’s License Scam:**

- Most of the scams are operated by other immigrants who offer an “international driver’s license.” Sellers will run color ads in local Spanish-language newspapers advertising assistance in obtaining the license, charging as much as \$100 for the license. Victims believe the licenses are legitimate.
- *GENUINE INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMITS ARE INTENDED TO AID TOURISTS AND ARE VALID ONLY WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY A CURRENT GOVERNMENT–ISSUED DRIVER’S LICENSE.*

#### **Lottery Ticket Scam:**

- This scam typically targets older Latino women. They claim they have to be U.S. citizen to claim lottery winning. Scammers ask the victim to cash the lottery ticket and they would get half of the winnings. They ask victim to provide cash collateral for the return of the winning lottery ticket.
- *NEVER AGREE TO GIVE CASH OR PROPERTY TO CASH A LOTTERY TICKET. NON-CITIZENS CAN PLAY AND WIN THE LOTTERY. IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY A SCAMMER, CALL YOUR LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY.*