

Jail Scam Alert



The South Milwaukee Police Department, along with many other agencies across the U.S.A., is again taking reports of jail/bond scams. The scammers' basic tactic is to pose as a grandchild and let the unsuspecting grandparent fill in the blanks. The scammer may say, "It's me, your favorite grandchild," to which the grandparent will guess the name of the grandchild it sounds the most like, and then the call proceeds from there. The scammer will say they have been involved in an accident or arrested and need bail wired to them in order to be released. The scammer often says they are in a foreign country or another state. In the updated scam, callers identify themselves by specific name as a particular family member. They say they are being held in jail in Mexico and they need bail money wired immediately. They lace their conversation with correct references by name to other family members, increasing their credibility.

Before sending money to anyone who claims to be a relative in need, verify what is actually taking place. Contact the purported relatives' parents or family members to verify they are out of country. Contact the agency the caller claims is holding them. A person being held in custody will be able to provide the name of the agency holding them (do not use the phone number they provide, look it up on your own and compare it to the one they provided). Remember, there is a tremendous amount of information available on the internet that scammers will use to gain your trust.

Do not wire money anywhere unless you are 100% certain the need is legitimate, whether it is for bail, or anything else. Do not provide personal information to a person you do not personally know, either in person or on the phone.

If you have additional questions or concerns you can contact Investigator Michael Hill at 414-768-8060 (3:40p.m.-12:00a.m.) or mhill@ci.south-milwaukee.wi.us.