



## **Carteret County Sheriff's Office**

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### ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **Carteret Citizens falling victim to Scammers**

The Carteret County Sheriff's Office wants to remind citizens of an old scam that has returned in which several county residents have recently fallen victim to.

Recent reports show that scammers are calling our residents claiming that their sons or grandsons have been arrested and jailed in foreign countries stretching from Mexico to France. The scammers are asking for money to be wired to the caller to post their family members bond so the loved one can be released from jail. Scammers are specifically requesting our citizens use electronic fund transfer companies such as Western Union or Money Gram knowing that once they receive the money on their end the transaction is virtually untraceable.

Routinely once the scammer has convinced you to send money your will start receiving additional phone calls requesting that more and more money be sent. Scammers will use any excuse ranging from the bond being increased to the judge has imposed fines that need to be paid. The scammer will say whatever they think you need to hear to get you to wire more money.

This scam is rampant around the country and usually targets the older generation. One day last year I received a call from my mother who asked me where I was. I told her I was at the Sheriff's Office working. She told me she had just received a call from my grandfather who informed her that I was locked up in a prison in Paris. My mother tried to convince my 89 year old grandfather in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida that I was not in Paris. The scammer was so convincing that my grandfather did not believe his own daughter of my whereabouts. My mother quickly asked me to call my grandfather. As soon as the call went through my grandfather asked if I was ok and what was I doing in Paris. After a minute my grandfather realized that I was safe and sound in Beaufort, North Carolina. Luckily for my grandfather he had not yet sent any money.

The Sheriff's Office would like to remind our citizens to never send money to anyone you don't know. This includes other scams such as sending money to claim a prize, claims a family member is in a hospital, or falling victim to someone who has tricked you into an online relationship that you have never met. Almost all of us would do anything we could for a family member in trouble. There are simple questions one could ask the scammer such as a full name or other specific information that they likely will not be able to answer. We always recommend getting a call back phone number for the caller which usually turns out as false or spoofed numbers. Hang up and start calling real family members or the actual person the caller is claiming is in jail in a foreign country. Most will quickly find that their loved one is safe and sound.