

Scam Alert: The Jury Duty Scam

The jury duty scam is rampant right now and victims in Santa Barbara have lost hundreds of dollars by falling for this scam.

Here's How The Scam Works:

Scammers impersonating law enforcement officers call and tell the targeted victim that they failed to show up for jury duty and a warrant has gone out for their arrest. Sometimes the crooks are able to "spoof" the number of the sheriff's office, so caller ID will show the sheriff's actual phone number. Victims are told they can avoid arrest by posting a bond. The victim is instructed to purchase a prepaid gift card (green dot or i-tune card) at Walmart or CVS then call the scammer and read the numbers on the back of the card. The crook can then activate the card and get the money.

Sometimes the scammer will try and get more money by telling the victim that the money didn't come through or that another warrant was issued. Often there are two people involved in this scam, one posing as the deputy sheriff complete with badge number, another posing as the clerk who arranges for payment. The victim is told that once the warrant is cleared, they will get their money back.

Here's what you need to know:

- You will always get a written notice from the court informing you that you have jury duty and giving you a number to call.
- The sheriff will not call and threaten arrest if you do not show up for jury duty.
- No law enforcement or governmental agency will ask you to pay a fine or post a bond by using a prepaid credit card or a green dot card.