

BEWARE OF JURY SCAMS!

The Third Circuit Court of Michigan will NEVER contact you by telephone to demand money or to threaten possible jail time over missing jury duty. Unfortunately, there are scammers who prey on people and use scary tactics, such as pretending to be law enforcement officers or Court officials, to obtain your sensitive information. In some instances, they convince people to transfer money to them, sometimes thousands of dollars, and in almost every case, it is impossible to recover the money once it has been transferred. By being aware of the scam tactics, you can avoid becoming a victim.

Watch for:

- Spoofing Telephone Numbers. Scammers utilize technology that makes it appear on Caller ID that they are calling from an actual law enforcement agency or courthouse.
- Real Names. Scammers may provide names of real law enforcement officers or Court officials, including judges. This information may be checked out if you did a quick Google search, which is likely how they got the information themselves!
- Real Callback Numbers. Many scammers will provide you with a callback number so that you can contact them. They are likely to call many people from the same number and will gladly take your return call!
- Badge ID Number and Title. Scammers often provide badge numbers and ranks when pretending to be law enforcement officers to help legitimize themselves to you.
- Fake Transfers. Scammers do their best to impersonate real life situations, including pretending to transfer you to a "supervisor" or other department within the agency both to legitimize their call and trick you into giving out your sensitive information.
- Multiple Calls. Scammers can be persistent, especially if they believe they have found a vulnerable target in you. They may call back and/or harass you using increasing pressure.
- Warrants. Most scammers mention that a warrant has or will soon be issued for your arrest. They want to convince you that you are backed into a corner - either pay or you will be arrested imminently. When you feel desperate or panicked, you are more likely to give into their demands. This can happen to every person regardless of their age, education, or socioeconomic status. Don't be embarrassed if you feel scared or uncertain. Most people's natural tendency is to be law-abiding and cooperative - the scammer is betting on it!
- Self-doubt. Scammers want to convince you that YOU have made a mistake, that YOU have missed an important deadline or appearance in Court. They work to make you second guess whether you really received something in the mail but then forgot or misplaced it. Remember - they only want to scare, confuse, and manipulate you into giving them the ability to steal from you!

What you can do:

- Keep pen and paper handy. Document as much as possible about the telephone call (every detail from the caller's name, telephone number, Court or law enforcement agency, and so on). These details can be important both when attempting to confirm information and when reporting the scam to actual law enforcement officials.
- Ask questions. The time a scammer spends on the phone with you is time they are not scamming someone else. Time is literally money to them, so the longer you can keep them answering questions, the more likely they are to get irritated with you and hang up. Don't panic—this is confirmation that they are not calling for a legitimate purpose!
- Remain calm. If you believe you are speaking with a scammer, do not give any personal or sensitive information. Call an actual Court or law enforcement agency directly to confirm whether you were summoned or missed a Court date. However, NEVER call a number provided to you by the caller.
- NEVER GIVE OUT SENSITIVE INFORMATION. Remember, the Internet is full of basic data about most people. The scammers may know something about you and may use that to convince you they are calling for a real reason. They are trying to obtain additional personal and financial information from you.
- Notify Authorities. Call your local law enforcement agency and report the incident.