

Mail Theft

Criminals are targeting the stand alone mail boxes in front of the US Post office. The criminals are “fishing” mail out of the mail box. When they are able to obtain envelopes containing checks, the criminals are removing the Pay to the Order of name and changing it to another name to be cashed, which is commonly known as check washing. It is recommended to use gel pen when writing checks to combat check washing. If you are a victim of check washing, contact your bank immediately.

Grandparent Scam

Individuals are calling the senior citizens of Orange County and telling the victim their grandson/granddaughter have been arrested. The individual on the phone tells the grandparent they need to mail cash or obtain gift cards to bail out their grandchild from jail and/or to pay for a lawyer. The phone caller will attempt to keep the victim on the phone until the transaction has been completed. You should NEVER send cash through the mail or purchase a gift card and provide the information to anyone on the phone. To prevent this scam hang up and call your grandchild to ensure their safety.

Warrant of Arrest

Is similar to the Grandparent scam. An individual will call the victim on the phone and either tell them there is a current warrant of arrest for that person or that they are getting a warrant of arrest because somehow they have linked the victim to a crime. In order to resolve the warrant of arrest, the caller instructs the victim to obtain gift cards and provide the security code over the phone. In most cases the caller will attempt to keep the victim on the phone until the transaction has been completed.

Kidnapping Scam

In this scam, the victim receives a phone call and when they answer the phone call the victim will hear a cry for help. Generally the victim will say a child’s name to see if their child was calling them. With that information, the suspect will inform the victim they have kidnapped their child and is demanding money for their release. The suspect will keep the victim on the phone and give the perception that if the call disconnects then harm will happen to their loved one. The suspect will instruct the victim to wire cash out of the country and when completed the call will disconnect. The victim will call their loved one and determine they have been scammed out of their money through fear.

Craigslist Scam

When advertising an item for sale on a website or mobile app, scammers will contact the victim and tell the victim they are interested in purchasing their item. The suspect is never able to meet the victim to pick up the item, instead they will send a check for the item and for shipping. The check sent is usually a lot more money than the item that was for sale. The suspect relies on the victim to contact them about the extra money. When the victim makes contact with the suspect, the suspect will ask the victim to send money to the moving company, who will then come and pick up the item. If the victim sends money to the shipper prior to the check clearing, the victim will discover the initial check was a bad check and the funds were removed from their account.

Romance Scam

Victims of a romance scam generally meet the suspect online through a dating website. The suspect will establish a relationship with the victim, but the suspect is never able to meet the victim. This scam involves the suspect telling the victim they have some type of emergency or need to borrow money for a failing business or medical procedure. Once the money is sent, the suspect will continue on with the relationship and try to obtain more money due to the established trust between the victim and the suspect. Eventually the victim will figure out that the relationship was established for fraud purposes and no money will ever be returned.