



## **Tips to Avoid Becoming the Victim of a Scam**

- If you are contacted by a known company and asked to provide any form of payment or personal information discontinue the contact and call the company yourself.
  - Look the number up; do not use the information they provide.
  - With internet phone services it is difficult to tell where a call is coming from. Some scammers will mimic the phone numbers of legitimate companies, agencies, or institutions (banks, the IRS, Police Department, etc.).
  - It is always a good idea to do an online search for the company name, website, and phone number.
  - Do not give out personal information unless you initiated the call.
- Reloadable cards (such as GreenDot, PayPal Cash, MoneyGram, etc.) are increasingly popular form of payment for scammers. While these are legitimate companies, they are often used by scammers because it is nearly impossible to reverse the transaction or trace the money.
  - Don't wire money to strangers, to sellers who insist on wire transfers for payment, or to anyone who claims to be a relative or friend in an emergency and wants to keep the request a secret.
- Law enforcement will not contact you to demand money for any violations you may have committed. If someone tells you that you have an arrest warrant it is probably a scam. We will rarely call you to tell you that you are wanted and will not accept payment to avoid you going to jail.
- Some scams will involve an email or text message from a bank or other institution. Never click on links. Call the institution directly.
- If someone offers to send you a check for more than they owe you, with the request that you send a portion to someone else it is probably a scam. In this common scam the check they send you is forged or stolen. It will pass through your bank but after you send money from your account the check will be found to be fraudulent and you will be out the money you sent them.
- If anyone from outside of the United States contacts you and requests money, for any reason, be cautious. It may very well be a scam.
- Follow the Ames Police Department on Facebook and Twitter for updates on scams that are being attempted in the area.

**If you think you may be the victim of a scam please call us**

**Ames PD: 515-239-5133**



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