



Telephone Scams

Over the past few weeks there has been a rise of telephone scams in the Los Angeles County area. Currently there have been no reported telephone scams in the City of San Marino. The San Marino Police Department would like to take this time to remind everyone of the top telephone scams.

IRS scams – Suspect calls the victim and claims to be an officer with the IRS. They will claim the victim owes back taxes or some other form of payment is due. They use fear and claim the victim will be taken to jail if immediate payment is not paid. Usually the suspects ask to be paid in gift cards, Green Dot cards or Bit Coin.

Technical Support – Suspect calls the victim and poses as a representative from Apple, Microsoft or other large company and claims their cell phone, cell phone carrier, computer or other electronic device has been infected with a virus or hijacked. Usually the suspects ask to be paid in gift cards, Green Dot cards or Bit Coin.

Family Member in Trouble – Suspect calls the victim and poses as their grandchild or other family member. The suspect claims to be in jail and are in need bail money, stranded with a broken-down vehicle and needs money to pay a tow service/mechanic, or trapped in a foreign country and need payment to be released. Sometimes they will ask you to speak to a second person to appear more legitimate. The second suspect will pose as a police officer, attorney or some other person of authority. Usually the suspects ask to be paid in gift cards, Green Dot cards or Bit Coin.

In each of these scenario's the suspect is asking for an unusual payment option. Unfortunately, these suspects prey on peoples fear and willingness to resolve a problem or help a family member that they never question the payment options.

Rules of advice-

- Never give out any personal information over the phone.
- Government agencies or companies do not use gift cards, Green Dot cards or Bit Coin as a form of payment.
- Hang up and call the government agency, company, friend or family member directly.
- Contact the San Marino Police Department and report the suspicious phone call.
- Report the suspicious call the FTC (Federal Trade Commission) at <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#crnt&panel1-1>

For more information please visit the FTC webpage that talks about these scams and several others at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts>