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Sheriff Lou Vallario
Garfield County, Colorado

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: March 18, 2024

Time: 11:00 AM

Title: New Twist on an Old Scam in Garfield County

IMPORTANT: Please direct any media requests to the contact above. Do not contact the Garfield County Emergency Communications Center or Patrol staff for media requests.



Recently Scammers have been once again using law enforcement and a threat of imminent arrest to relieve honest people of their hard-earned money! They are using a two-step approach to make it appear that the threat is authentic and trick the victim into complying with their requests.

Someone claiming to be a "Federal Agent" will initially contact the victim. The agent may accuse the individual of being involved in drug trafficking or some other crime that has risen to the Federal level.

Shortly thereafter, the victim is contacted by law enforcement, typically in our County a Deputy from the Garfield County Sheriff's Office, they may even use the name of a known Deputy. The Deputy tells them, "There is an active warrant out for their arrest". They are told; they can pay a fine directly to the Deputy and avoid being arrested. They are instructed to meet the Deputy with one or more Visa gift cards, often in the amounts of \$500.00 each or to send the cards to the Deputy and this would pay off the warrant.

There are a few things to know and remember in this and all scams:

- 1) Whenever someone asks you to pay a debt or a fine with a gift card, do not do it! There is no way to prove that you ever paid and the funds are virtually impossible to recover.

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- 2) No Law Enforcement Officer will ever call you to tell you they have an active warrant for your arrest.
- 3) Deputies will not accept payment in any form, on-site for a violation or warrant.
- 4) Remember, it is easy for the con artist to use known names and ghosted numbers to make calls appear legitimate. If you are concerned about a call wait until normal business hours, Monday through Friday and call the main Office of the business, agency or department that supposedly wants you to resolve a debt or fine immediately to avoid consequences.

No additional information will be released.

The mission of the Garfield County Sheriff's Office is to provide solutions for the people through professional, ethical and compassionate conduct.

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