

*The Commonwealth Of Massachusetts*  
*County Of Hampden*



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## **Sheriff Nick Cocchi warns public of latest round of scams**

Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi is warning the public after several Western Massachusetts residents were contacted via phone by someone claiming to be a member of the Sheriff's Office.

In several phone calls reported over the past few days, the scammers claimed to be members of the Sheriff's Office and requested money to either settle a warrant for missing a court appearance, missing jury duty or to avoid arrest until their innocence in an unspecified court case was resolved.

The Sheriff's Office will NEVER conduct such business via telephone or electronic means. If it was a serious matter as the scammers claim, a uniformed deputy would be knocking at your door.

"Unfortunately, we're seeing another round of scam calls where these characters are trying to use the fear of arrest or legal complications to get money from honest people," Sheriff Cocchi said. "Even if it seems like a legit call, showing from one of our real phone numbers and they give the name of an actual employee, it is not real. If you get a suspicious call, just hang up."

In a previous round of scam calls, some scammers directed the would-be victims to deposit cash into a "kiosk" near the department's serving office on Liberty Street in Springfield. At other times, they were requesting payment in gift cards, which are as difficult to trace as cash.

Sheriff Cocchi warns that even if the phone number on the caller ID appears to be from a local law enforcement agency, it is not legitimate and likely generated via a spoofing service on the Internet. Legitimate government and law enforcement agencies will NEVER do business on the phone or by digital means.

Sheriff Cocchi is asking members of the public who receive such a message to hang up and report it to their local police department.

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