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## **Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi warns public of new scam targeting Western Mass. residents**

LUDLOW, MA – December 11, 2024 – Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi is warning the public of a new phone scam targeting locals in Western Massachusetts. On Wednesday, a local DPW employee received a call from someone identifying themselves as “Deputy Daniels,” directing him to meet locally.

The scammer said the would-be victim needed to meet him to pay for a court-ordered DNA swab. Other variations of the scam where would-be thieves pose as deputies include them saying you missed jury duty, have an arrest warrant, or some other related legal matter.

"These scams prey on people's fear of legal trouble, exploiting that fear to steal their hard-earned money. Unfortunately, we expect an uptick in these scams as the holidays draw closer," said Sheriff Cocchi. "Law enforcement will never call to resolve a warrant or request money for any reason. If you receive a call like this, hang up immediately."

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. 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 messages to hang up and report it to their local police department. And if you're reading this, please share the message with loved ones.