



Putnam County Justice Center
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 12/05/17

Scams Impacting Putnam County

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – December 5, 2017, The Putnam County Sheriff's Office is alerting residents about phone scams occurring in our area.

Please be suspicious of anyone contacting you and representing themselves as an employee of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office Warrant's Division, Putnam County Jail, IRS, Microsoft, someone raising money for law enforcement or anyone saying you have 'WON!' a gift card. These are just a few of the many scams that are out there right now. There is even a scam called the "Neighbor Scam" in which fraudsters are generating local area codes and the first three digits of familiar telephone numbers. The person will try to convince you that the call is legitimate, and they can be very convincing. Some may have call back phone numbers with a recording that falsely identifies itself as belonging to law enforcement.

Scam artists have recently been claiming to be a 'lieutenant' or 'sergeant' with the Putnam County Sheriff's Office. They may provide a badge number or use the name of a local judge or deputy to appear credible. The person will say you have a pending arrest warrant for failure to appear in court unless you pay the fine with a prepaid credit card. Do not provide anyone with credit card information over the phone regarding the payment of court fines. **Warrants are not served over the phone**, and fines are not collected over the phone with prepaid credit cards.

One way to prevent falling prey to these criminals is to familiarize yourself with how they operate.

- Scare tactics – They try to frighten the person into giving out personal or financial information
- Immediate response required– Payment is due immediately
- Payment methods – Scammers want payment in the form of wire transfers, debit cards, gift cards, etc.

There are other steps you can take to protect yourself or your loved ones. Never share user names or passwords for bank accts, computers or credit cards to someone you don't know who has called you asking for this type of information. Adjust your phone's settings to flag unknown numbers' text messages. Apps like HIYA or Mr. Number can also help you identify and flag unknown numbers on cell phones. However, common sense is still the best weapon to use when dealing with phone scammers. If you did

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not initiate the call, be wary of anyone asking for money or any type of personal information.

Please report phone scammers to the Putnam County Sheriff's Office (931) 528-8484 or to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) by calling 877-FTC-HELP (382-4357).

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