



# **DON'T BE A VICTIM**

**SCAMS, FRAUDS, AND SWINDLES: THE FAKE GOVERNMENT AGENCY SCAM**



**In 2020 the Chesterfield Police  
Department investigated 45 reports  
concerning scams and frauds totaling  
over \$1.5 MILLION in losses**



**The following slides discuss one of the many scams Chesterfield residents have fallen victim to**

**This episode:**

**The Fake Government Agency SCAM**



# THE FAKE GOVERNMENT AGENCY SCAM



## WHAT IS IT?

- **SOMEONE CONTACTS YOU, USUALLY BY PHONE OR EMAIL CLAIMING TO BE A GOVERNMENT AGENCY**
- **THEY SAY YOU HAVE A WARRANT OUT FOR YOUR ARREST/ ARE A SUSPECT IN A CRIME/ OWE MONEY FOR BACK TAXES/ HAVEN'T PAID A BILL/ ETC.**
- **THEY TELL YOU IN ORDER TO MAKE THINGS "RIGHT" YOU NEED TO PAY A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY AND TO PAY IT QUICKLY.**
- **THEY USUALLY DEMAND PAYMENT IN PRE-PAID GIFT CARDS, BUT MAY ALSO DEMAND OTHER FORMS OF E-PAYMENTS, MONEY ORDERS, OR CASH THROUGH A DELIVERY SERVICE**
- **MANY TIMES THEY HAVE PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND USE THAT TO CONVINCING YOU THEY ARE LEGITIMATE**



# THE FAKE GOVERNMENT AGENCY SCAM

- **THEY WILL SOUND VERY CONVINCING. THEY WILL GIVE YOU THEIR “BADGE NUMBER” AND HAVE OTHERS TALK TO YOU AS WELL WHO ARE PART OF THE “INVESTIGATION”**
- **THEY WILL DEMAND YOU NOT TELL ANYONE ELSE WHAT IS GOING ON**
- **THEY WILL MAKE YOU BELIEVE TIME IS A FACTOR AND YOU MUST HURRY**
- **MANY TIMES THE SUSPECT WILL KEEP YOU ON THE PHONE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE FINANCIAL TRANSACTION. *EXAMPLE: THEY WILL BE ON THE PHONE WITH THE VICTIM THE ENTIRE TIME THEY PURCHASE THE “REQUIRED” GIFT CARDS AT A LOCAL STORE, THEN HAVE THE VICTIM READ THE ACTIVATION CODES IN REAL TIME.***

# THE FAKE GOVERNMENT AGENCY SCAM



## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **DON'T ANSWER A PHONE NUMBER YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE AND/OR AREN'T EXPECTING; EVEN IF IT APPEARS THE AREA CODE LOOKS LOCAL. SCAMMERS WILL SPOOF PHONE NUMBERS.**
- **DON'T ANSWER UNSOLICITED EMAILS FROM ORGANIZATIONS YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE OR AREN'T EXPECTING**
- **BE AWARE THAT NO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, GOVERNMENT AGENCY, OR ANY OTHER AGENCY IN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY WILL EVER DEMAND IMMEDIATE PAYMENT FOR SOMETHING OVER THE PHONE. ESPECIALLY VIA PRE-PAID GIFT CARDS OR ANY OTHER FORM OF HARD TO TRACE TYPE OF PAYMENT**
- **WHATEVER AGENCY THEY CLAIM TO BE, IT IS OK TO HANG UP IF IT DOES NOT FEEL RIGHT. CALL THE LEGITIMATE AGENCY'S LISTED PHONE NUMBER TO VERIFY. \*NOTE: DON'T USE A PHONE NUMBER/ EMAIL/ WEBSITE PROVIDED BY THE SUSPICIOUS PERSON FOR VERIFICATION**



# THE FAKE GOVERNMENT AGENCY SCAM

## WHAT CAN YOU DO (CONTINUED)

- **CALL YOUR LOCAL POLICE, FAMILY AND/OR FRIENDS FOR ASSISTANCE**
- **IF YOU AREN'T AWARE OF BEING INVOLVED A CRIME/ INVESTIGATION WHICH THE SCAMMERS ALLEGE YOU ARE, DON'T LET THEM CONVINCING YOU OTHERWISE. THEIR WHOLE GOAL IS TO MAKE YOU BELIEVE WHAT THEY ARE TELLING YOU**
- **LOOK AND LISTEN: MANY TIMES THESE SCAMMERS ARE FROM OVERSEAS – LOOK FOR MISSPELLINGS AND POOR GRAMMAR IN WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE. IF YOU ARE ON THE PHONE – LISTEN TO HOW THEY ARE SPEAKING AND WHAT THEY ARE SAYING**
- **IT'S OK TO CEASE COMMUNICATION IF YOU DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE**

# THE FAKE GOVERNMENT AGENCY SCAM



- **IF YOU FEEL YOU'VE BEEN THE VICTIM OF A FRAUD, IMMEDIATELY CALL YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION TO TRY TO STOP PAYMENT**
- **CONTACT YOUR LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT**
- **REPORT THE FRAUD TO THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION : [FTC.GOV](https://www.ftc.gov)**