

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 12, 2017**

Delaware Justice of the Peace Court issues a Phone Scam Alert

Scammers using “spoofed” number to try get money for “bail”

The Justice of the Peace Court is alerting the public to a telephone scam where calls appear to be coming from a Justice of the Peace Court telephone number and a caller then demands bail money to secure the release of a relative.

It is important for people to know the Justice of the Peace Court **WILL NOT** call individuals and request payment of a loved one’s bail. Any calls of that nature would come from the loved one themselves and not a court employee. Justice of the Peace Court employees will **NEVER** call the relatives of someone being held on bail and demand payment over the phone.

The Justice of the Peace Court is issuing this advisory because over the past week the Court has received a number of complaints from citizens who have received these bogus phone calls. The scammers are using a hacking technique known as “spoofing” where they make it appear on Caller ID that their call is coming from a different phone number, in this case a Justice of the Peace Court number.

According to those who have alerted the Court about this problem, the calls begin with the scammers claiming that a person’s son or grandson is in jail and that they need \$500 to secure their release. According to those who have received the calls, when they attempted to get more information from the caller about the situation, the call is disconnected.

As a general rule, citizens should never provide their credit card or bank account information to anyone over the telephone unless they are certain they know who they are dealing with.

In recent years this type of phone scam has become common, most recently with callers claiming to be with the Internal Revenue Service and demanding immediate payment over the phone.

Detectives with Capitol Police have been notified and are investigating these phony phone calls. If you have been victimized by this scam, or need more information, please contact Mark Hitch with the Justice of the Peace Court at the below number.

**For more information please contact:
Mark Hitch, Operations Manager
Justice of the Peace Court
302-323-6333 or Mark.Hitch@state.de.us**