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Phone scammers posing as Middlesex deputy sheriffs

BILLERICA, Mass. – In recent days, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office has received reports of a new round of arrest scam calls in which perpetrators are posing as members of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office.

The recent round of calls varies slightly in nature, with some individuals reporting they were threatened with arrest for failure to pay a debt, while in others for failure to attend jury duty. In each case, the perpetrators indicated the only way to avoid arrest was to pay money.

“At no time will a legitimate member of law enforcement ever threaten arrest or demand payment for debt over the phone,” said Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian. “Nationwide, these scams have become more prevalent and they show no signs of abating.”

Due to the nature of these scams, it is often impossible to trace phone calls or identify suspects. For that reason, the IRS, local police departments and sheriff's office across the country have tried to educate the public about their prevalence and ways residents can protect themselves. Earlier this year, the Better Business Bureau rated arrest scams as the number one scam of 2014 (<http://goo.gl/RwCQUk>).

Any individual who has received one of these calls and lost money is encouraged to immediately contact their local police department to report the incident. Residents with questions may also contact the Sheriff's Investigation Unit at 978-932-3106.

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