

# Delaware State Police Shares Safety Tips to Protect Delawareans from Phone Scams

The Delaware State Police is providing a phone scam advisory. Delaware State Police has noticed an increase in scams statewide. The following will give you a synopsis of recent scams for awareness:

- A victim received a phone call from a blocked number. The perpetrator posed as a police officer from a local agency and advised the victim that they failed to show up for court. Additionally, the perpetrator identified a Superior Court judge by name and claimed that the judge would sign a warrant if the victim did not send money to “freeze the charges.” When the victim disconnected the call, the perpetrator called back using a spoofed number that appeared to be coming from the New Castle County Emergency Operations Center.
- A victim received a phone call from a perpetrator claiming to be with the Publisher’s Clearing House, stating that the victim won \$7000 weekly and a white Mercedes Benz. The perpetrator asked the victim to purchase Visa gift cards and provide him with the gift card numbers so he could set up an account for the victim to withdraw their winnings. The victim lost approximately \$ 3,500 as a result of this scam.

As a reminder, law enforcement agencies will never request payment for fines, traffic tickets, or bail. All these transactions are conducted by the respective court systems and never over the phone. Electronic payments are also never requested via phone for court matters.

“Spoofing” can also be used as a form of deception during

these phone scams. Spoofing is when a caller deliberately falsifies the information transmitted to your caller ID display to disguise their identity. Spoofing is often used to trick someone into giving away valuable personal information so it can be used in fraudulent activity or sold illegally.

The following tips can help you avoid becoming the victim of a scam:

1. Don't answer calls from unknown numbers. If you accidentally answer, hang up.
2. Avoid wire transfers or prepaid cards for payments because scammers often use these methods.
3. If a caller (live or recorded) suggests hitting a button to stop receiving calls from them, hang up. This can be a trick to engage you in conversation.
4. Never give out any [personally identifiable information](#)—for example, account numbers, Social Security Numbers, passwords or PINs, or your mother's maiden name.
5. If a caller claims to be with a legitimate company, call back using the phone number on a statement you have from them or their verified, secure website. This is particularly important if the caller asks you to verify personal information or make a payment.
6. If you are immediately pressured for information – be cautious. You are not obligated to answer any question asked of you.
7. Set your password for your voicemail. Some voicemail services are set up to automatically allow access to your mailbox if you call in from your phone. If a scammer spoofs your number, they can access your voicemail if you have not set a password or PIN.
8. Use a call-blocking tool (talk to your phone company) or reputable app on your mobile device. There are different options for different platforms. Do some research and select an option that aligns with your preferences and needs.

9. Set up reliable credit monitoring services.

You can learn more about phone scams [here](#).