

## PROTECT YOURSELF (continued)

5. Slow down. Do not agree to pay money based on one phone call. Do what you can to verify that the request is legitimate. Be suspicious if your grandchild asks you to keep a secret from other family members. If he says he is calling from a police station, independently verify the phone number of the station and offer to call him back.
6. Don't let your pride get in the way of contacting the authorities. It's embarrassing to be taken advantage of, but you make a bad situation worse if you don't report it. With the benefit of hindsight, the truth is easier to see. Scammers are really good at what they do, and many people fall victim to their stories. If you wired money, immediately call the money transfer service to report the fraud. Then, call your local police station and share your experience.

### Visit Our Website

There's lots of great information at [www.ukiahpolice.com](http://www.ukiahpolice.com). Check it out!



## Sign Up for Notifications

The Ukiah Police Department's mission is simple: to make Ukiah as safe as possible. If you have any suggestions or comments about how we can improve, please let us know.

If you would like to know more about crime in your neighborhood, you can sign up for telephone, cell phone and email notifications by clicking the Nixle button at [www.ukiahpolice.com](http://www.ukiahpolice.com). You can also leave crime tips on our website.

## Who Do I Call?

Emergency 9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 for any life-threatening emergency or crime in progress.

Non-Emergency (707) 463-6262  
Online Crime Report: [ukiahpolice.com](http://ukiahpolice.com)

Business Office (707) 463-6241  
Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm



**Ukiah Police Department**  
Safety, Professionalism, Community Service

Nancy Sawyer  
Community Service Officer & Business Liaison  
300 Seminary Ave., Ukiah, CA 95482  
ph (707) 467-5708 • fx (707) 462-6068  
[nsawyer@cityofukiah.com](mailto:nsawyer@cityofukiah.com) • [ukiahpolice.com](http://ukiahpolice.com)



**Ukiah Police Department**

# Phone Scams Targeting Seniors



# SENIORS CONCERNED ABOUT DOING THE RIGHT THING ARE BEING TARGETED

Many older Americans grew up in an era when doing the right thing meant helping family members, reporting for jury duty, and paying your taxes. Unfortunately, scammers know this and they are preying upon people's integrity and sense of duty to steal from them. Here are five common scams to watch out for.

## GRANDPARENT SCAM

The Grandparent Scam goes like this: the scammer obtains some personal information about his victim, including the names and locations of family members, one of which is a grandchild. He calls the potential victim posing as the grandchild with a plausible story about getting in trouble and needing money. In their desire to help, grandparents rush to send bail money, money to pay off a debt or to pay for medical expenses. The Federal Trade Commission reports receiving more than 10,000 "family/friend imposter" fraud complaints in 2015 alone.

## JURY DUTY SCAM

This scam entails someone calling and accusing the victim of failing to show up for jury duty and claiming a warrant has been issued for their arrest. The victim is given the choice of paying up (usually by money transfer or loading a pre-paid card) or having the police come and arrest them.

## IRS SCAM

Since most of us are already a little scared of the Internal Revenue Service, when someone calls and says they are from the IRS, demanding payment for overdue taxes, we believe them. Once again, the scammer demands money for failing to do your civic duty and threatens the victim with arrest if payment isn't immediately forthcoming.

## UTILITY SCAM

In the cold dead of winter or the sweltering heat of summer, the last thing people want is for their heater or air conditioner to be turned off. In this scam, a caller pretends to be from the utility company and threatens to cut service unless the victim brings their account "current" immediately.

## LOTTERY SCAM

This scam tries to convince you that you've won money in a foreign lottery. A reasonable-sounding person explains that all you have to do is pay the nominal taxes up front and he or she will send your winnings.

## PROTECT YOURSELF WITH THESE TIPS FROM AARP

Avoid being taken in by these and other scams with these helpful tips.

1. Protect your computer with antivirus and anti-spyware software so intruders can't steal information.
2. Don't open file attachments from people you don't know. The attachments might look harmless, but they can allow hackers to access your computer remotely and learn all about you--even copy files and get into your electronic bill pay and banking programs.
3. Be cautious on social media. When you share personal information on social media sites like Facebook, scammers can use that information to manipulate you.
4. Think critically and ask questions. It's hard to get past your own emotional response when a family member sounds like they desperately need your help. But before you wire money, think of questions that only a family member would know: what you did last time you were together, some inside joke you share. The question should ask about something you've never shared publicly.