

**For Immediate Release
Contact: Sgt. Christie Wood
(208) 769-2320**

Chief Lee White

Date: November 17th 2014

Coeur d'Alene Police Department
Protecting and serving with excellence

On today's date Coeur d'Alene Police took a report of a fraud initiated on an elderly male. The victim said he received a phone call from a male caller who identified himself as Deputy Harris and informed him he had missed jury duty in September. The caller said he now has a bench warrant for his arrest and he would either be arrested or he could turn himself into the County jail by 4:00pm. He also told him to avoid jail he could go to a local Albertsons or Safeway and purchase two Green Dot Visa credit cards.

The victim was instructed to purchase one for \$499.00 and another one for \$399.00. The caller told him cash, checks, or money orders would not work due to changes in collecting at the Sheriff's Office. He was told that he would likely get the money back because a judge would be sympathetic to him.

The victim insisted on speaking to a supervisor, and was soon connected to a Lt. Rawlins who threatened him with additional fees associated with sending a police unit to pick him up if he did not pay immediately.

The victim purchased one card for \$499.00 and provided the male caller with the 16 digit code on the card, and the 3 digit code on the back. He then drove to the Sheriff's Office and learned Lt. Rawlins and Deputy Harris do not exist. Because the suspect had the card information it was too late for the victim to recover his money.

These types of scams are all too common. Suspects especially prey on the elderly and claim to be someone in position of authority. Another version of this scam is the caller pretending to be an IRS agent. Citizens are reminded to verify the information the caller has told you. Be wary of phone scams, internet scams etc. and protect yourself from becoming a victim. Contact local law enforcement if you suspect you are the victim of a fraud. Attached to this release is a voicemail received by a local citizen today. It is an example of the type of phone scams citizens should be aware of.