

# Sheriff



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## **OCSO FRAUD HOTLINE TIPS HELP WARN LOCALS ABOUT ONGOING SCAMS**

The Fraud Hotline **651-7674** at the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is a valuable way to get information to law enforcement about ongoing scams that occur in our area.

More than one-thousand Okaloosa residents have contacted the Sheriff's Office, primarily via the Fraud Hotline, regarding scams received through phone calls, e-mail, or regular mail.

The Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit often uses this information to send out warnings or alerts to inform and protect others who may be targeted. Here are some of the more common scams scenarios:

- asked to *wire* money
- winning lotteries from outside the US
- payment is required to receive your winnings
- receiving payment, a check from an individual, drawn on a business account in a totally different location and/or a totally unrelated business
- buying online when payment required in advance
- selling on line & receiving a check for substantially more than your sale price

Keep these tips in mind:

The FBI, IRS and legitimate government agencies do not send emails or make phone calls on personal and/or financial matters.

Don't call back any area codes which are unfamiliar to you. If do you get a call reference your finances that you're unsure of, ask the person to put everything in writing and mail it to you for evaluation.

And keep in mind that today's scammers are very sophisticated. They'll often attempt to verify information they have somehow acquired and will read off your name, address, phone number, other personal facts, even your credit card number and then casually ask for the three digit number on the back of your card or the numbers on the bottom of your check.

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"The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate"