



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ATTORNEY GENERAL
ELLEN F. ROSENBLUM



Grandparent Scam Alert!

Last year, Oregonians reported sending more than \$300,000 - most often, by wire transfer - to scammers pretending to be a relative in trouble in a foreign country. Their story usually follows a familiar line: They were traveling overseas with a friend, and were in some legal trouble, got arrested, and need money to be bailed out of jail.

Alternatively, they were in a car accident and need money urgently for medical and legal costs. The "relative" asks for the money to be wired to an account as soon as possible. Of course, none of this is true. The caller is not, in fact your relative. If you fall for it -- you have been scammed!

Here is what you need to know to avoid becoming a victim of this type of "grandparent" scam:

1. Do not be fooled by detailed greetings where the caller seems to know your relative's name, such as: "Hi Grandma, it's Joey. I'm in trouble..." Many smart scammers are able to get names and details from online directories, social networking websites, or even obituaries. Some hack into email accounts to get this personal information to help with their fraud.

2. When the supposed family member pleads with you not to tell his or her family what happened, don't trust that request. Immediately reach out to parents or other relatives to ensure your relative's safety. More than likely, your relative (grandchild, niece, nephew, etc.) is safe and sound at work, school or home -- not in trouble in a foreign country.

3. When in doubt, contact the Oregon Department of Justice's Consumer Hotline for help at 1-877-877-9392. NEVER send money before verifying the legitimacy of calls such as this, and, in any event, don't send money to accounts you are not familiar with by wire transfer. The Oregon Department of Justice can help you determine if the situation is a scam. If it fits this description, the chances are almost 100% that it is a scam!

Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum is committed to the financial and physical safety of all Oregonians. Please let the Oregon Department of Justice know if you have been scammed. Only about 10% of victims of these scams report them. So the real loss is closer to 5 million dollars! These scammers are very smart and they are hard to catch. You can help the Oregon Department of Justice by reporting these incidents.

THANK YOU FOR BEING ALERT TO SCAMS!

If you think you have been a victim of a fraud or scam, call the Oregon Department of Justice at 1-877-877-9392 and request a complaint form be mailed to you or visit oregonconsumer.gov to file a complaint online.