



DEA warns of increase of scam calls

EL PASO, TX - The Drug Enforcement Administration warns the public to be careful of telephone calls from criminals posing as DEA agents or other law enforcement personnel threatening arrest and prosecution for supposed violations of federal drug laws or involvement in drug-trafficking activities.

The DEA says it continues to receive reports from the general public and practitioners indicating that they have received calls threatening legal action if an exorbitant fine is not paid immediately over the phone. The callers typically identify themselves as DEA personnel and instruct their victims to pay the “fine” via wire transfer to avoid arrest, prosecution and imprisonment.

The reported scam tactics are continually changing, but often share many of the following characteristics:

- Callers use fake names and badge numbers or, alternatively, names of well-known DEA senior officials.
- The tone of calls is urgent and aggressive. Callers refuse to speak or leave a message with anyone other than the person they are calling.
- Callers threaten arrest, prosecution and imprisonment, and in the case of medical practitioners, revocation of their DEA numbers.

Look before you answer

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- Callers demand thousands of dollars via wire transfer or, in some instances, in the form of untraceable gift cards taken over the phone.
- Callers falsify the number on caller ID to appear as a legitimate DEA phone number.
- Callers will often ask for personal information, such as Social Security number or date of birth.
- When calling a medical practitioner, callers often reference National Provider Identifier numbers and/or state license numbers. They might also claim that patients are making accusations against the practitioner.

It's important to underscore that DEA personnel will never contact practitioners or members of the public by telephone to demand money or any other form of payment. The DEA will not request any personal or sensitive information over the phone. Notification of a legitimate investigation or legal action is made via official letter or in person.

Impersonating a federal agent is a violation of federal law.

Anyone receiving a telephone call from a person claiming to be a DEA special agent or other law enforcement official seeking money, should refuse the demand and report the threat using the online form or by calling 877-792-2873. Reporting scam calls will greatly assist DEA in investigating and stopping this criminal activity. Any urgent concerns or questions, including inquiring about legitimate investigations, should be directed to the local DEA field division.

To report scam activity online, visit
<https://apps.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/esor/spring/main?execution=e1s1>.

Visit the interactive websites at www.justthinktwice.com, www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com

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and www.dea.gov to learn more about the dangers of drug abuse.