

# SCAM ALERT

## Scam: A Friend of a Friend

### Target: All Seniors

Social media is a great way for seniors to stay in touch with friends and family. It has been very helpful for people trying to connect with friends from the past and distant relatives. Unfortunately, scam artists are taking advantage of this in order to obtain your personal information. In a new scam called “farcing,” the scam artist sends you a friend request claiming they share mutual friends or relatives with you or are part of a group that you had belonged to in the past.

Once you accept the friend request, the scam artist begins to search your online profile to collect your personal information, such as your hometown, the schools you attended, employers, siblings, and vacation spots. The scam artists continue their scheme by sending friend requests to your friends and family and so on.

## Scam Artists: Reaching Out Through Social Media!

The following steps are recommended to protect your social media identity:

- 🔊 Use the privacy settings on social media websites to manage who can access your profile. Each social media website has specific instructions. Go to the “Settings” option to choose who sees your personal information, check your recent activity and set up log-in alerts.
- 🔊 Your personal profile information includes the following: your name, address, telephone numbers, photographs, schools you attended, your past employers, and other private pieces of information about you.
- 🔊 If you receive a “Friend” or “Follow” request from someone that you do not recognize or not certain that you know, do not accept the friend request.
- 🔊 Be cautious if you receive direct messages from new friends or family that request specific details about you or your personal information.
- 🔊 Notify the website if your profile has been hacked or your pictures stolen.

**If you think you may be a victim of a scam, contact San Bernardino County Adult Protective Services (APS) at 877-565-2020, or your local police department.**