








SCAM
ALERT

FAMILY EMERGENCY SCAMS

Scam predators may contact you by phone, email or text message and impersonate a distant friend or family member claiming to have been in an accident, arrested or hospitalized. There has been an increase in this criminal activity during the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. To make the story seem legitimate, another scam predator may impersonate a doctor, nurse, lawyer or police officer. Remain calm and take down all the information!

Social media sites make it easy to find enough personal and family information to make these scam predators sound credible, and they are banking on your emotions and concern to outweigh your doubts. Do not let this happen to you!

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Better Business Bureau (BBB) recommend the following actions if you receive this type of message:

-  **Stop and check the facts.** Resist the urge to act immediately, no matter how dramatic the story may be.
-  **Call directly.** Use a telephone number for your family member or friend that you know is genuine. Do not use the numbers they give you or follow any links in emails or text messages.
-  **Reach out for support.** Ask another relative or mutual friend to look into the situation.
-  **Never wire money - or send a check, money order or gift card.** Verify the situation before attempting to help.
-  **Do not share any personal information!** Protect yourself and others from scam predators!

Note: You may report scam predators to the FTC, BBB, Adult Protective Services (APS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime Complaint Center.

If you think you may be a victim of a scam, contact
San Bernardino County APS at 1 (877) 565-2020
or your local police department.