

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Megan Mann  
Information Officer/Attorney Advisor  
United States District Court  
Middle District of Florida  
(904) 549-1915

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For Immediate Release

#### **U.S. DISTRICT COURT AND U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

#### **WARN PUBLIC OF JURY DUTY SCAM**

*Scammers pose as law enforcement officers and threaten arrest  
if victim does not pay a fine*

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Chief U.S. District Judge Timothy J. Corrigan and U.S. Attorney Roger B. Handberg warn the public of a nationwide scam in which callers pose as U.S. Marshals or other government officials and claim that the victim is about to be arrested for not appearing for jury duty but can avoid arrest by paying a fine. The Middle District of Florida has recently received an increased number of phone calls from victims regarding these scams and deems it of the utmost importance to promote awareness and prevent more people from falling prey to such scams. The scammers may provide convincing information, including about the victim (e.g., addresses, date of birth, etc.), real names of federal judges or court employees, actual court addresses, court phone numbers, and case and badge numbers. Scammers may even “spoof” the phone number on the caller ID so that the call falsely appears to originate from a court number or the number of another government agency. The caller then tells the victim they can avoid arrest by paying an immediate fine and walks them through purchasing a prepaid debit or gift card or making an electronic payment to satisfy the “fine.”

These phone calls are fraudulent, and citizens should not provide the caller with any personal or financial information. In no instance will a court official, U.S. Marshals Service, or other government employee contact someone and demand payment or personal information by phone or email.

“We’ve seen a resurgence of jury scams in recent months where a caller demands that someone pay a fee or face arrest for missing jury duty. Let me be clear: these calls are fraudulent,” warns Chief Judge Corrigan. “If you receive a phone call from someone claiming to be a judge or other court official, do not give them your credit card or other financial information. The court appreciates those citizens who are called for jury service and always endeavors to treat them with respect.”

“Jury service is one of the most important public services a citizen can perform, and it is a serious matter when scammers attempt to use a citizen’s sense of civic duty to defraud them,” said U.S. Attorney Roger Handberg. “If someone calls and threatens you to pay them to not be arrested for missing federal jury duty, you are being scammed. This scam works by trying to create a false sense of urgency that you must pay money immediately to avoid arrest. Do not fall for it. Hang up the phone and instead report the call to the appropriate federal authorities.”

Residents of the Middle District of Florida who believe they have been the victim of such a scam are encouraged to report the incident to the Federal Trade Commission at <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/> and your [local FBI Field Office](#). Below are a few preventative facts to remember if contacted by a scammer:

- The court will always send a jury summons by U.S. Mail. A court will never ask for a credit/debit card number, wire transfers, bank routing numbers, or demand payment over the phone for any purpose.
- A prospective juror who disregards a summons will be contacted by the District Court Clerk’s Office by mail and may, in certain circumstances, be ordered to appear before a judge. Such an order will always be in writing and signed by the judge.
- A fine will never be imposed until after an individual has appeared in court and been given the opportunity to explain their failure to appear. If a fine is imposed, it will be in open court and reduced to writing (and will not be payable by gift card number).
- Report scams to the District Court Clerk’s Office, U.S. Marshals Service, or Federal Trade Commission. You can remain anonymous when you report.

- You can authenticate a call by contacting the Clerk's Office of the U.S. District Court. Each division phone number is on the Court's website at [www.flmd.uscourts.gov](http://www.flmd.uscourts.gov).

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