



For Immediate Release
**HINGHAM POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

Contact P.I.O. Sgt. Steven Dearth
dearths@hingham-ma.gov 781-804-2205
hpd.org

September 2, 2018

Elderly Resident Falls Victim to “Grandparent Phone Scam”

Hingham, MA – An elderly Hingham woman fell victim to the “Grandparent Phone Scam” and was scammed out of \$1,000.00.

On August 8, 2018 at 10:00am an Officer was dispatched to meet the 85 year old Hingham resident about a scam. She explained she received a series of calls from a man who identified himself as her “grandson” and used his actual first name. He said he was in jail after fleeing the scene of a crash and needed \$1,000.00 bail. He asked her to purchase two VISA gift cards for \$500 each and he would call her back.

A woman then came on the phone and said she was her “grandson’s” lawyer and he was due to appear in court in just three hours so he needed the money immediately.

The resident went to Walmart, purchased the two VISA gift cards, and returned home. She received another call from her “grandson” and he asked her for the numbers on the gift cards. The “grandson” then asked her to return to Walmart and purchase \$900.00 more in 2 VISA gift cards. The resident went to her bank to withdraw cash to buy the cards. The bank teller told her she was most likely being scammed.

The resident then contacted her credit card provider and VISA but the cards had already been used.

This is a familiar scam that has been occurring for years. We have had several other residents lose money and shared those incidents to help increase awareness. In many cases, the “grandchild” who calls explains their voice may sound different because they were in an accident or because they were crying. The “grandchild” may not use the actual name of the grandchild until victim says it first during the conversation. The scammers can obtain the first name from social media or internet searches for relatives. These scammers appeal to the grandparent’s sympathy and a desire to help their “grandchildren”. The “grandchild” will plead with them not to tell anyone, especially their “parents” so they cannot confirm that the grandchild was not arrested or learn it is a scam attempt.

It is likely many other scam victims do not come forward out of embarrassment or fear of losing their independence. Please share this information to help educate other seniors.

###