

PRESS RELEASE
January 9, 2014
Fraud Involving Jury Duty

Recently, attempted jury scams have begun to be reported in the Southern District of Florida. Individuals have reported being contacted over the telephone and requested to pay fines for missing jury duty. Our Court never makes requests for payment of fines from jurors over the telephone. Rather, jurors who miss jury duty may be requested to provide an explanation, or directed to appear at court, but they will not be solicited for payment of fines over the telephone. Although jurors may be held in contempt for failing to appear, that sanction is only imposed by a judge in open court with an opportunity for the summoned juror to explain the failure to appear. If anyone is contacted by someone requesting such payments on behalf of the Court, please do not make the payment, and instead immediately contact the Southern District of Florida Jury section at **(800) 865-1775 or (305) 523-5190**.

These jury scams are occurring with increasing frequency across the country. According to the U.S. Courts [web page](#) and [video](#), federal courts never ask prospective jurors to provide sensitive information, such as Social Security or credit card numbers, over the telephone. It also is a crime to falsely represent oneself as a federal court employee. Anyone suspecting a fraudulent call should contact the clerk's office at [their nearest district court](#).

Examples of juror scams:

- Victims are falsely being told they missed jury duty and must pay a fine or face arrest. The scams have occurred most frequently in the District of New Mexico, but federal court officials in Utah and Colorado said they recently received similar complaints. In the New Mexico scam, callers posing as court employees are demanding payment of a \$400 fine, even though victims never received a jury summons. Victims are being advised to purchase a MoneyPak prepaid credit card, call a designated phone number, and read off the card number.
- In the Western District of New York, victims are being sent a fictitious arrest warrant on a criminal charge and offering a chance to avoid arrest through the payment of a specific amount.

Please contact Steven M. Larimore, Court Administrator • Clerk of Court, if you have any questions.

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