

# SCAM ALERTS



If you receive communication that purports to be from this court, you may call 703-299-2100 (Alexandria Division), 804-916-2200 (Richmond Division), or 757-222-7229 (Newport News/Norfolk Division).

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## **December 23, 2015: U.S. Marshals Warn of Phone Scam**

The U.S. Marshals Service is warning the public today of a telephone scam involving a man posing as a U.S. Marshal. The man reportedly identifies himself as a U.S. Marshal while calling victims to advise that he or she has missed federal grand jury but can avoid arrest by paying a fine immediately.

There are several reported incidents of this scam taking place this week in Hampton Roads. The Marshals Service became aware of the scam after receiving several calls from alert citizens in the Norfolk, Virginia area.

The U.S. Marshals Service is a federal law enforcement agency and does not seek payment of fines or fees via the telephone for individuals.

The U.S. Marshals Service urges individuals not to divulge personal or financial information to unknown callers and highly recommends the public report similar crimes to the FBI or their local police or Sheriff's office if they are the victims of fraud. For internet related fraud, the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center can be contacted at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov).

Additional information about the U.S. Marshals Service can be found at [www.usmarshals.gov](http://www.usmarshals.gov).

## **July, 2014: Jury Email Scam**

Citizens are being targeted by a juror phishing email that asks recipients to provide personal identifiers (SSN, DOB, mother's maiden name, etc.) on an attached PDF form and emailed back to the originator. **Please do not respond to the email.** Our Court will not request that your personal identification information be sent directly in an email response. Our request for you to complete a qualification questionnaire will be initiated by formal written correspondence and we will provide instructions for our juror participants to be authenticated over a secure connection.

## **June, 2014: Arrest Warrant Scam**

You've received a warrant by fax or email saying a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government wants to arrest you. Charges may be for money laundering or bank fraud, or missed jury duty. To avoid arrest, the warrant says, send money. It's a scam. The warrants may display a bogus logo of an unspecified "United States District Court," a case number, and various charges. Typically, recipients are instructed to call a number to get a "settlement" or to wire money to avoid arrest. The warrant is phony. A valid warrant would not be served by fax or e-mail. It would be served in person by a U.S. Marshal or other law enforcement officer.

Anyone receiving a fake arrest warrant should contact the FBI or the district U.S. Marshals Office. If there is any question regarding the authenticity of a warrant, contact your district clerk of court. The fake arrest

warrants have been reported across the country, including in the District Courts for the Southern District of Ohio, Southern District of Illinois, New Mexico, Western District of Kentucky, Utah, the District of Columbia, and throughout Florida. Anyone demanding or obtaining money or anything of value while impersonating an officer or employee of the United States may be fined and/or imprisoned up to three years.

**January, 2014: Email Scam**

The federal judiciary has learned of an email scam, in which emails purporting to come from federal and state courts are infecting recipients with computer viruses.

According to the Security Operations Center of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the emails are instructing recipients to report to a hearing on a specified day and time or in the form of an eviction notice. The emails also instruct recipients to review an attached document for detailed case information. When the attachments or links in the email are opened, a malicious program is launched that infects the recipient's computer. Several state courts have reported similar schemes, and also are warning the public about potential viruses.

Unless you are actively involved in a case in federal court and have consented to receive court notifications electronically, you generally will not be served with court documents electronically.

**August, 2013: Jury Telephone Scam**

Increasingly, calls are being made to the public from individuals who claim to be an officer of the court, stating that the person failed to report for jury duty and a warrant has been issued for their arrest. When the person denies receiving the summons, the caller asks for verification in the form of date of birth, social security number, place of employment, or even a credit card number. Fraudulent emails are also being sent to the public indicating that they must report for jury duty on a federal case.

These are scams and are malicious attempts to obtain personal information from you or to have you falsely report to a courthouse. Do not provide any information to the caller and hang up the phone immediately and delete any emails that summons you for jury duty on a federal case. Clerk's Office staff will never ask you for this kind of personal information or summons jurors by email. At most, a Clerk's Office staff member might ask you to confirm your mailing address to ensure that jury summonses are received.