

UFPD-17-005-PUBLIC BULLETIN

SCAM ALERT

SCAMMERS TARGETING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The University of Florida and other universities throughout the US have seen an increase in scammers targeting international students, and/or their families, similar to this one:

From the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

SCAM ALERT – IMPOSTER CALLS!

Release Date: September 13, 2016

If someone claiming to be a government official or law enforcement officer calls making threats such as deportation, beware! Hang up and report it!

Here's How it Works

A number appears on your caller ID that may look like a legitimate government number. When you answer, the person on the phone poses as a USCIS or other government official or law enforcement officer. The scammer (or scammers) will say that there is a problem with your application or additional information is required to continue the immigration process. Then, they will often ask for sensitive personal and financial information, demand payment, and threaten you with deportation, arrest, or other negative consequences if you do not comply.

The scammer will then order victims to make a payment - and will often order them to go to a nearby bank or store and withdraw money or purchase a prepaid card, gift card, voucher, money order or make some other wire transfer, money exchange, payment or withdrawal.

(Note that the scammers are often able to direct victims to nearby banks or stores by using online maps to study the area in which a victim resides.)

If you receive a call like that, hang up immediately.

We will never ask for any form of payment over the phone or in an email. If we need payment, we will mail a letter on official stationery requesting payment. Do not give payment

over the phone to anyone who claims to be a USCIS official. In general, we encourage you to protect your personal information and not to provide details about your immigration application in any public area.

If you have been a victim of this telephone or email scam, please report it to the Federal Trade Commission at <http://1.usa.gov/1suOHSS>. If you receive a suspicious email or voice message and are not sure if it is a scam, forward it to the USCIS webmaster at uscis.webmaster@uscis.dhs.gov. We will review the messages received and share with law enforcement agencies as appropriate. Visit the Avoid Scams Initiative at uscis.gov/avoidscams for more information on common scams and other important tips.

If you have a question about your immigration record, please call the National Customer Service Center at 800-375-5283 or make an InfoPass appointment at <https://my.uscis.gov/appointment>. You can also use [myUSCIS](#) to find up-to-date information about your application process.

For more information about other common scams: [US Citizenship and Immigration Services-Common Scams](#)

If you are unsure of the validity of someone contacting you or if you believe you are the victim of a scam, please contact the [University of Florida Police Department](#) or your local law enforcement agency. If you are a UF student, you may also contact [UF Student Legal Services](#) for assistance.