



For Immediate Release
**HINGHAM POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

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Elderly Woman Scammed Out of Thousands

Hingham, MA – A 92 year old Hingham resident fell victim to a phone scam and wired \$14,100 in three transactions last month. The phone scam is a commonly used one in which the caller pretends to a relative in trouble far from home and needs money wired immediately. It is commonly referred to as an “Arrested Relative Scam”.

On December 15, 2020 a 92 year old woman received a phone call from a man claiming to be her son. Her “son” said he had been assaulted, his arm was broken, and he was in trouble. He said he needed her help. He said he needed \$8,100 wired to a bank account. The woman believed it was her son on the phone and she was concerned for his safety. Her “son” said someone would be calling her within a few hours to give her the details of where to wire the money. He pleaded with her not to tell his wife so she would not panic.

A short time later another man called and gave her the specific bank information. He told her to wire the money to person in Bronx, New York. He instructed her that if a bank teller got suspicious, she should insist she knew the person. The woman went to her local bank and the teller warned her it may be a scam. The woman said it was ok and approved sending the money.

On December 16 the man called her and said the wired money had been delayed and she needed to send another \$5,000 to get her son out of trouble. She returned to her bank and again the teller warned her that it may be a scam and she should not wire the money. The woman said it was ok and sent the money. She wired an additional \$1,000 as well.

The woman was suspicious the calls may be part of a scam but wanted to try to help who she thought was her son. She later confirmed it was a scam with family members and reported it to police on January 13.

This phone scam, and variations of it, have been reported by residents for several years. The scammers rely on the parent/grandparent's desire to want to help. The scammers typically plead with the parent/grandparent not to tell anyone that they are in trouble. This is done so the parent/grandparent does not try to contact anyone and learn that their relative is actually safe at work or home.

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