



For Immediate Release  
**HINGHAM POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

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Phone Scammers Claim to Be Police Chief to Steal Thousands from Resident

Hingham, MA – A Hingham couple fell victim to a phone scam in which the scammer claimed to be the Hingham Police Chief. The scammer altered the caller ID to display the Hingham Police phone number. The residents lost \$17,000 after purchasing gift cards from two Target stores and reading the card numbers to the scammers.

On Friday, March 12, 2021, the couple (ages 62 and 57) came to the police station to report they had been the victims of a phone scam. They said they received a call a person who claimed to be the “Chief of the Hingham Police”. The caller ID displayed “781-749-1212” which is the Hingham Police business number.

The scammer explained that someone had compromised their identity. The scammer said they already knew their bank account information, the last 4 digits of their social security numbers, their address and their phone numbers. The scammer explained the only way to save the money in their account from being stolen was to purchase Target gift cards for the full balance that was in their bank account.

The resident went to one Target store, purchased all the cards the store had, and drove to a second Target store to purchase the remaining cards. He purchased \$17,000 worth of Target cards.

Over a series of nine calls from the scammers the resident gave the gift cards numbers.

Typically, scammers redeem gift cards immediately before the victims discover they have been scammed. The resident is attempting to contact Target to see if the cards can be canceled.

As a reminder, police departments will never call asking for money in any form. No government agency will ever call asking purchase gift cards or wire money to them. Remember, the caller ID can be altered to display any name or phone number. If you receive a call and want to verify who the caller is, hang up, and call them back on the phone number listed online.

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