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Jury duty scams reported in Oregon, again

WARNING: Bogus phone calls, emails, or texts on jury service may lead to fraud

(Salem, Ore.) The Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) is reporting that Oregonians are once again being targeted by fraudulent phone calls, emails, or texts threatening them with fines, prosecution, or jail time for failing to comply with jury service. According to the OJD, the most recent reports are from the Willamette Valley, but it is likely that other areas may be targeted as well.

In these calls, emails, or texts, recipients are pressured to provide confidential data such as bank account information, credit card numbers, date of birth, or social security numbers, potentially leading to identity theft and fraud. These fraudulent calls or messages – which threaten recipients with fines and jail time if they do not comply – are not connected with the state or federal courts.

State and federal courts do not require anyone to provide sensitive information in a telephone call, email, or text. Oregon state courts may provide jury notices and reminders by text, but these will not request personal information, make threats, or demand money.

Persons receiving such a jury-related telephone call, email, or text demanding information or money should not provide the requested information or payment, reply directly to the text or email, click on any links, or open any attachments – even if it appears that the message is coming from the court or a local police agency. Scammers can often create messages that look like they are coming from a legitimate source. If possible, get the caller's name and number and then hang up. Reach out directly to the local court to verify or report the contact.

For state courts, including the circuit courts in each Oregon county, report the call or contact to the local circuit court jury coordinator immediately. Contact information for Oregon's state circuit courts is available at courts.oregon.gov/courts. For Oregon's federal courts, information about jury service and possible scams is available at ord.uscourts.gov/jurors.

Jury duty is a vital civic responsibility and should be taken seriously by all citizens. However, it is a crime for anyone to falsely represent himself or herself as a state or federal court official.

If you have received one of these calls, emails, or texts and have given out personal information, monitor your account statements and credit reports carefully. If any unauthorized charges are made, report the theft to local law enforcement and the Federal Trade Commission at 877-438-4338 or www.consumer.gov/idtheft. And contact a credit bureau to request that it place a fraud alert on your credit history.

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