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## DEA AGENT SCAM

The Utah Bankers Association urges its member banks and members of the public to be cautious of telephone calls from criminals posing as DEA or other law enforcement personnel who ultimately demand money be wired to a foreign bank account.

It is important to underscore that DEA personnel or other law enforcement will never contact members of the public by telephone to demand the immediate payment of money. If you receive such a call you should contact law enforcement immediately.

The reported scam tactics are continually changing, but often share many of the following characteristics:

- Callers use fake names and badge numbers or, alternatively, names of well-known DEA senior officials.
- The tone of calls is urgent and aggressive; callers refuse to speak or leave a message with anyone other than the person for whom they are calling.
- Callers threaten arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment and even send photos of falsified arrest warrants.
- Callers warn of an imminent threat to family members from drug cartels if they talk to anyone about the demand.
- Callers demand thousands of dollars via wire transfer or, in some instances, in the form of untraceable gift cards taken over the phone.
- Callers falsify the number on caller ID to appear as a legitimate DEA phone number.
- Callers will often ask for personal information, such as social security number or date of birth.
- When calling a medical practitioner, callers often reference National Provider Identifier numbers and/or state license numbers. They also might claim that patients are making accusations against the practitioner.

This is a particularly frightening fraud that not only results in financial harm, but psychological and emotional harm as well. Due to the compelling nature of the threats, banks may find it difficult to dissuade customers from making the transfers; therefore, public awareness of the scam is critical to protecting victims.

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