

Grandparent Scams

Scammers often target the elderly by pretending to be a close family member, typically a grandchild, in urgent need of financial help.

The scammer contacts the victim, usually over the phone, and impersonates a distressed family member—most commonly a grandchild—or poses as someone claiming to represent them, like a lawyer or police officer. The scammer then fabricates a story where the grandchild is in some form of trouble, such as needing bail, covering legal fees, or paying hospital bills. They then pressure the grandparent to immediately send money to cover these supposed expenses.



Mid-States Organized Crime Information Center



Resist the pressure to act immediately. Scammers rely on creating a sense of urgency to make you act without thinking.

Take your time to assess the situation carefully.



Verify the identity of the caller or sender by asking questions that only the real person or organization would know.

Contact the agency or person directly using a trusted number or an official source.



Do not provide personal, financial, or account details to unsolicited callers, emails, or messages.

Sharing this information can lead to identity theft or financial fraud.



Do not send money through wire transfers, gift cards, or cryptocurrency.

Legitimate organizations will never ask for payment in these forms or demand immediate payments.



If you receive a suspicious call, end it immediately without providing any information.

Scammers rely on keeping you engaged, so hanging up is your best defense.



Notify the appropriate authorities, such as your local law enforcement agency, about the suspicious activity.

Reporting helps protect others from becoming victims and assists in tracking down scammers.



Share details of the scam with family, friends, and colleagues to raise awareness and prevent them from falling victim.

Spreading the word helps others recognize and avoid similar scams.