



**ABBOTSFORD  
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

## **Abbotsford Police warn of bail money scam.**

The Abbotsford Police Department warns of an increase in scams involving claims that a relative has been arrested and needs money to be bailed out of jail.

In a few recent incidents, victims were called by someone impersonating a criminal lawyer who stated they were calling on behalf of the victim's family member. The "lawyer" said that the family member was in police custody but that a Judge would release the family member on bail. The scammer also stated that the investigation is "on-going" and subject to a "gag order," and details of the investigation would not be shared. The victims are advised that shouldn't they talk to anyone about the investigation, and if they do, the "bail money" paid would be forfeited to the court. In one incident, the victim believed the fraudster to be a Caucasian male who spoke English without an accent.

Phone scams are becoming more sophisticated. Fraudsters can make it appear as if their calls are coming from a legitimate number, making it easier to coax victims into sending them money. In addition, victims are regularly convinced to share personal information and to pay for non-existent outstanding debts or fines - or, in this case, fraudulent bail.

Unfortunately, many individuals who do fall victim to these scams cannot recoup the money they send.

If you suspect you are the target of a "posting bail" phone scam:

1. Resist the urge to act immediately, no matter how dramatic the story is.
2. Attempt to call the person purported to be in custody or check the story out with someone else in your family or circle of friends - even if you've been told to keep it a secret.
3. Don't SEND payment to a physical address. Be wary if cash, gift cards or cryptocurrency (e.g., Bitcoin) is requested. Legitimate bail is always paid in person at the police station or courthouse.

The Abbotsford Police warn that police or an unknown lawyer would never contact members of the public to demand money, especially for bail or as a condition of avoiding jail time.



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To report or more information about how to protect yourself from fraud can be found at <https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/report-signalez-eng.htm>

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