



# OFFICE OF SHERIFF

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## O'BRIEN COUNTY

Allen Schuknecht, Sheriff  
240 1<sup>st</sup> street N.E. P.O. Box 260  
Primghar, IA 51245-260

Main 712.757.3415  
712.957.3415  
Jail 712.957.5245  
Fax 712.757.5445

[www.obriencountysheriff.com](http://www.obriencountysheriff.com)

Date of Release: **July 20, 2017**

Nature: Phone scam - Fraud Investigation

Releasing Agency: O'Brien County Sheriff's Office

The O'Brien County Sheriff's Office wants to remind all citizens that phone scams are continuing to happen in the area where people are requesting money to be sent them.

On Tuesday July 18, 2017, the O'Brien County Sheriff's Office received a complaint from an O'Brien County resident that she was a victim of phone scam. In this incident, an elderly woman received a phone call from a male subject that identified himself as her grandson. The grandson explained that he had been arrested and was put in jail and needed cash in order to pay a bond so he could get out of jail. The caller begged the victim not to call anyone else due to the embarrassment it would cause him. Another male subject was then put on the line and claimed to be a police officer who was investigating the case. The police officer said \$7200 would be needed to get her grandson out of jail.

The subjects called back later with specific instructions on how to send the money but continued to emphasize that the grandmother couldn't say anything to anyone because it would compromise the police investigation and cause embarrassment to her grandson. The local citizen was concerned for the welfare of her grandson so she sent the money, as instructed, by United Parcel Service (UPS) overnight delivery to an address in Maryland. The grandmother later confirmed that her grandson was safe and had no involvement in the incident in Maryland.

The O'Brien County Sheriff's Office is actively working the case with Maryland law enforcement authorities in an attempt to locate the people responsible for this crime.

The O'Brien County Sheriff's Office is reminding people that when they receive these types of calls to use caution and attempt to check the validity of it. People should always first check with their friends or relatives to attempt verify the validity of the information received in the phone call. They also should never send cash in the mail or any other type of parcel delivery service. In this case, United Parcel Service was used but any parcel delivery service could be used. Suspects often play on the sympathies of elderly people and use high-pressure statements to prevent them from reporting the crimes.

Law enforcement agencies frequently receive reports of these types of cases and want to remind people to never give out their personal identifying information such as their social security numbers, or personal bank account information.