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BULLETIN



TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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◀ **PHONE SCAM ALERT – KIDNAP / RANSOM** ▶

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moving money for better

DETAILS: Torrance residents are being contacted via cellular and landline telephones by suspects claiming to be members of a Mexican drug cartel in Mexico City who have kidnapped the victims' children (male and female, adult and minor) and instructed how to pay the ransom. The victims are asked how much money they can access (via bank account withdrawals and credit card advances) and directed to take that amount (usually \$1,000 to 5,000) to **CVS** and wire it via **WESTERN UNION**. The suspects will put someone pretending to be the victim's kidnapped child on the phone: "Mom, help me. I'm in trouble. Do what they say.", "Mom, I'm in trouble. They got me in their truck.", "Mom, I'm in real trouble. Help me! Help me!"

While the suspects are currently directing the victims to wire funds via **WESTERN UNION**, **MONEYGRAM**, **GREENDOT MONEYPAK** and **RELOADIT** are also possibilities.

OTHER TELEPHONE SCAMS INCLUDE:

- Bail and attorney's fees for a family member who has been arrested
- Unpaid taxes owed the IRS
- Fees or taxes due for winning a lottery or sweepstakes
- Problems with work visa or immigration



If you sense a customer's transaction could possibly be related to the information contained in this bulletin, if a customer seems nervous or panicked while withdrawing cash, wiring money, or purchasing reloadable credit cards, consider showing this bulletin to that individual. The information could prevent the victim from following through with the suspects' demands and sustaining a loss.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT AT
* * 310.618.5641 * * WITH ANY RELATED INFORMATION**