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FACEBOOK SCAM ALERT: Balderas Warns New Mexicans of New Financial Scams

Santa Fe, NM – This morning, Attorney General Hector Balderas issued a Scam Alert to warn unsuspecting New Mexicans to beware sharing private personal or financial information over Facebook because a variety of scams are victimizing New Mexicans. As with all scams, prevention is the key to protecting your finances and personal information.

“Even though people can appear friendly on Facebook,” Attorney General Balderas warned, “getting to ‘know’ someone on Facebook is rarely safe. If you don’t know a ‘person’ who attempts to contact you on Facebook, you can’t even be sure you’re dealing with a real person. Instead, you could be dealing with a ‘robot’ whose sole assignment is to take and misuse your identity. You could also be dealing with a predator whose purpose is to lure you into a dangerous situation.”

The Office of Attorney General continues to receive a wide variety of complaints that originated from using Facebook to communicate and to browse commercial sites. Recently, one woman reported to the Attorney General that she ordered a small jar of face cream only to have her personal bank account immediately charged \$180. Another woman reported “meeting” a potential romantic partner on Facebook only to be scammed for \$400,000 before realizing that the online “date” pirated her financial information.

Attorney General Balderas advises a few ways to avoid problems on Facebook and other online sites:

- Don’t volunteer your personal or financial information. You as the consumer are in the best position to protect your private information and your assets.

- Don't send money to someone who has solicited you. Instead, if you want to spend money, find the online shop you want by doing your own search and verifying that it is legitimate.
- Beware, be careful, and report problems.

There are a variety of ways to report problems and to get help after a scam. Facebook allows consumers to report privacy violations and suspicions that a user account has been "hacked" for use by someone not entitled to the information. Consumers can contact Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/help/1216349518398524?helpref=hc_global_nav to report a problem.

The Federal Trade Commission collects information about scams and can use the information to warn others not to make the same mistakes. To report a scam, call the FTC at 1-877-382-4357 or contact it online at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/>.

Finally, the FBI also collects and acts upon consumer internet crime, including online fraud. To access help available through the FBI, contact www.ic3.gov.

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