

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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SCAM ALERT: Balderas Warns New Mexicans of Jury Duty Scams

Santa Fe, NM – This morning, **Attorney General Hector Balderas** issued a Scam Alert regarding scammers who are calling people in the Santa Fe-area threatening to jail or fine them \$2,000 for failure to report to jury duty. The jury duty scam may be familiar to people in other parts of the state as the Office of the Attorney General has had previous reports from Bernalillo and Doña Ana Counties, but the scam appears to have resurfaced in the Santa Fe-area. **Attorney General Balderas'** statewide Scam Alert was issued today to urge New Mexicans to be on guard for this scam and protect themselves from financial harm.

“The courts do not call people to notify them of fines or warrants,” **Attorney General Balderas** said. “New Mexico Courts will issue formal paperwork for jury summonses, for fines or for warrants—but will never call people and threaten them. Anyone who receives a threatening call from the ‘courts’ for failing to appear for jury duty should immediately be suspicious that it is a scam and hang up the phone.”

To check whether you have been called for jury duty, you can review the following website for links to local courts: www.jury.nmcourts.gov. The local courts can verify whether you have been summoned to jury duty.

The Office of Attorney General has received complaints detailing the approach of the Santa Fe jury scammers which consists of the following:

Callers generally tell those who answer that they should have reported for jury duty, but now owe a fine of up to \$2000 for failure to appear or for contempt of court. Even if the person who answers protests that he or she received a jury summons but got excused, the scammers still may

insist that the person who answers must pay a fine immediately in order to avoid being booked, fingerprinted, photographed and detained for up to 24 hours, since the paperwork was not properly processed.

“As frightening as these calls may be,” said **Attorney General Balderas**, “people should not pay a supposed fine to anyone on the basis of a phone call. These callers are scammers and need to be identified and stopped.”

The state’s Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is aware of the scams, and has verified that information from jury rolls has not been inadvertently disclosed. There is no information to indicate that jury rolls have been compromised, according to AOC. Instead, scammers are just playing a numbers game. Since about 10% of the population receives a jury summons in any given year, callers can easily persuade recipients that they may be out of compliance.

To report these scams please contact the Office of the Attorney General at [\(505\) 717-3500](tel:5057173500) or by visit www.nmag.gov.

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