



Texas Department of Public Safety

Information for the News Media

Media Relations Office

(512) 424-2080

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Texas DPS warns of telephone scams using its name

Scammers have been calling Texans in various parts of the state, demanding that residents immediately pay for overdue red-light tickets.

The most recent incident was reported in Cleveland, Texas, where police say that residents have received calls from someone claiming to represent DPS and demanding payment on a red-light safety camera ticket. The scammers say that an arrest warrant will be issued if the person receiving the call does not provide a credit card number, as well as Social Security numbers and other personal information.

The Texas Department of Public Safety does not collect traffic fines or oversee red-light cameras.

“You should never give out personal information over the phone when someone else initiated the call,” said Steven C. McCraw, director of DPS. “If you receive a call like this, you should write down any contact information from the Caller ID, if available, and then contact your local law enforcement agency.”

DPS also reminds Texans that the department does not call requesting charitable donations.

“The Department of Public Safety will never solicit financial contributions from private citizens. DPS is funded by tax dollars and our employees will never call your home or business to solicit donations,” McCraw said.

DPS advises citizens not to give money to these groups as the funds may not go to the causes that are claimed. Some groups include in their names the terms, “Texas Rangers,” “State Troopers,” “Texas Highway Patrol,” or “Department of Public Safety.”

While some current or former employees may be members of some of these associations on their own time, these organizations are not affiliated with the DPS nor do they represent the department. Many of these organizations provide only a small percent of their donations for good causes, with the majority of the donations going to administrative and operational purposes.

Some of these organizations suggest that official looking decals resembling official DPS affiliation placed on personal vehicles may somehow keep the individual from receiving a traffic citation from law enforcement. There is also a lack of public accountability and transparency by many of these organizations.

If you are contacted by a group you believe is misrepresenting itself as part of the Texas Department of Public Safety, contact the Consumer Protection Division of the Texas Attorney General's Office at 1-800-621-0508.

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