



Hampton Police Division Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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Charity Fraud Prevention

Recently, a concerned citizen contacted the Hampton Police Division in reference to a telemarketing firm that was fundraising for a local “police” affiliated charity organization. Although, the investigation has shown that this particular charitable organization appears to be legitimate and that a fraud did not take place, the Hampton Police Division would like to take this opportunity to make citizens aware that the Hampton Police Division **does not** solicit financial donations and that citizens should be aware of potential fraudulent phone scams. There are numerous ways to prevent becoming a victim of charity fraud:

- **Ask how your money will be used.** What percentage will go to the actual programs versus the administrative and fundraising costs?
 - **Request written information** that gives the full name, address, and phone numbers of the organization as well as a description of the programs it supports.
 - **Check out any charity** you don’t know with the local charity registration office, Better Business Bureau, or a charity watchdog group such as www.charitywatch.org, www.give.org, and www.guidestar.org.
 - **Don’t give in to high pressure or emotional appeals** that urge you to donate on the spot. If you are unsure, don’t be afraid to ask for more information.
 - **Don’t be fooled by a name** that closely resembles the name of a respected and well-known charity. Make sure you know who you are dealing with.
 - **Give directly to the charity if possible**, rather than to an organization claiming it will forward your donation to the charity.
 - **Keep careful records of all your donations** so you can identify fraudulent scams that claim you made a pledge you don’t remember making.
 - **Ask for the charity’s tax-exempt letter** indicating its IRS status. You can’t claim a tax-deductible donation if the charity does not have one.
 - **Never give cash.** Make your contribution in the form of a check payable to the full name of the charity.
 - **Give out your credit card number only if you are certain that you are dealing with a legitimate charity**; then make sure that the numbers will be encrypted.
 - **Don’t give out your personal information i.e. Date of Birth or Social Security number.** A charity does not need it in order for you to claim a tax deduction.
- * Prevention tips provided by the National Crime Prevention Council

Sergeant Jason Price will receive questions about this release at 757-727-6638.

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