



District Attorney's Office ▪ 18th Judicial District

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Fraud Alert

One-Ring Scam Calls are Back in Circulation

There has been a sudden spike in the number of complaints from area residents who are receiving one-ring phone calls over their landline and cell phones. The phone rings once then abruptly cuts off before the person has a chance to answer, leaving only a missed call notification on the phone. The call is then followed by repeated phone calls that happen either in short sequence - usually overnight, or over the course of a day. These calls always display the same call-back number.

Victims may be tempted out of sheer curiosity to answer, or they may assume the caller is trying to get through but is being cut off. Those who do call back are put on hold by an operator where they wait, often a minute or longer before realizing that no one is coming on the line. In fact, they have just put forth an international call to a scammer who collects the long distance fees that are billed to the consumer. Fees usually include a connection charge in the range of \$35.00 - \$40.00, in addition to fee-per-minute charges. The scam is usually not discovered until the victim gets the phone bill but fortunately, these fees can be deducted if it is reported to the phone carrier when the bill comes in. As with other robocalls, scammers are using auto-dialers to send these out to thousands of consumers a minute which accounts for the excessive volume of robocalls that consumers receive every day.

Other signs:

- The caller ID number will be prefaced by a three digit number resembling an area code that could be construed as any US code. However, such calls often originate in other countries that also use three digit area codes.
- Other numbers may be spoofed to appear to be local.

To remove charges:

- Look for long-distance calls usually listed on the bill as *premium service*, *international call* or *toll call*.
- Report the date of this scam to your phone carrier, the details of the scam and the phone number that appeared on caller ID and ask them to deduct the charges. Also, if you don't anticipate needing international phone call service, request that your phone company remove this feature from your plan.
- Report the call to the Federal Communications Commission at <https://FCC.gov/complaints>