

Grandparent Emergency Scam

This is known as the "Emergency Scam" or "Grandparent Scam" Variations have been around for years. In the typical scenario, a grandparent receives a phone call from a scammer claiming to be one of their grandchildren. The scammer goes on to say that they are in some kind of trouble and require money immediately. Examples are being arrested and needing bail money, being in a car accident and requiring money for damages, being trapped in a foreign country and needing money for emergency travel expenses.

The request will almost always be to wire transfer the money to their location. Victims don't verify the story until after the money has been sent as the scammers normally ask that the grandparent not tell other family members. The victim believes they are wiring money to their grandchild when in reality the money can be picked up anywhere. The locations used for the wire transfer are always fictitious.

Variations often include an old friend or neighbour needing money. In many cases the scammers will simply say "Grandpa"? and many of our elderly may answer back with a name of which grandchild they think is calling. At that point the scammer becomes that grandchild on the phone.