

PINELLAS COUNTY – The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is encouraging the public to be on alert to a recent phone scam occurring in Pinellas County. The suspect is calling residents in Pinellas County and identifying himself as a Pinellas County Sheriff's Office employee.

According to deputies, the suspect left a citizen a voicemail identifying himself as Sergeant Christopher Hill, requesting the citizen call him back. Once the citizen called the phone number back, they were transferred to another suspect identifying themselves as Lieutenant Paul Ellison. After identifying himself as a Pinellas County Sheriff's Office employee, the suspect informed the citizen that they had an outstanding warrant. The suspect then instructed the citizen to send money via Bitcoin and Zelle to take care of the warrant.

Deputies say the suspect is calling from the following local number: (727)354-4454 and possibly also spoofing their number to appear as (727)582-6200, the main phone number for the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.

PLEASE NOTE: The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office will NEVER call citizens requesting money over the telephone. We advise citizens not to give personal information or account information over the phone and call the Sheriff's Office to report suspicious activity.

If anyone has information on this scam or has become a victim, they are asked to call the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office at (727) 582-6200.

The investigation continues.