



TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



JAN 2024 ISSUE 01

WORDS FROM THE SHERIFF



Phone scams are a prevalent and sinister use of modern technology. On a cyclical basis, for the last several years, scammers have used the actual names and ranks of TCSO deputies to scare people into giving them money.

The most common scam is the jury duty scam. Scammers spoof a TCSO phone number, so the call appears legitimate on caller ID. The scammer uses aggression and intimidation, claiming the resident has failed to report for jury duty and must pay a fine immediately to void a warrant that has been issued for their arrest. The scammer might also pose as a local judge as a scare tactic to "settle" civil proceedings.

Victims have also reported receiving calls from a caller ID that comes up as "Travis County Jail." The scammer states that the person's son or daughter caused a car crash and is now in jail needing to be bailed out. In some instances, the scammer has even posed as the son/daughter in jail.

In every instance, the caller seeks immediate payment via gift card or MoneyPak. The scammer will often stay on the phone with the resident while they purchase the cards. They ask the resident to read the code on the back of the card and immediately receive the funds.

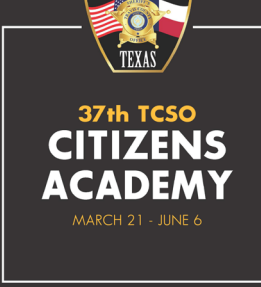
TCSO will never seek payment for anything via wire transfer, gift cards or MoneyPak!

Although the scammer's caller ID says the call is coming from TCSO, the number is actually being spoofed. The scammers are most often calling from outside the United States. TCSO receives reports regarding the scams and cooperates with Federal investigators.

If you receive a call from someone claiming to be with our agency or other local agencies demanding immediate payment, especially by gift cards or MoneyPak, hang up.

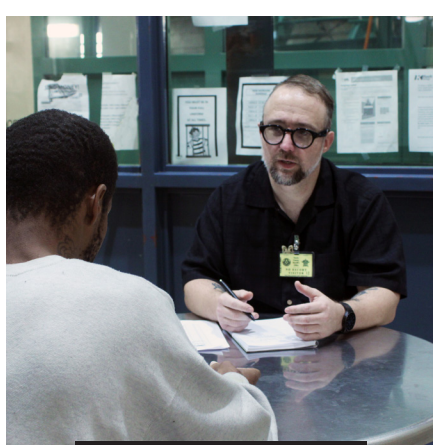
Scammers target senior citizens and are often successful in confusing or scaring them. Please make sure your elderly loved ones are aware of the scams.

If you're in doubt, please call us at 512-854-9770 before giving the caller any money. We're happy to take your call and give you accurate information. I encourage you to visit our [website](#) for more information on scams and to follow us on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) for traffic, scam and safety alerts.



TCSO will be hosting the 37th Citizens Academy March 21 - June 6. The academy provides citizens valuable insights on the criminal justice process and the hows and whys of TCSO operations and services. We believe the education and dialogue the academy offers will further our efforts in improving community relations and the quality of life for Travis County residents.

APPLY NOW



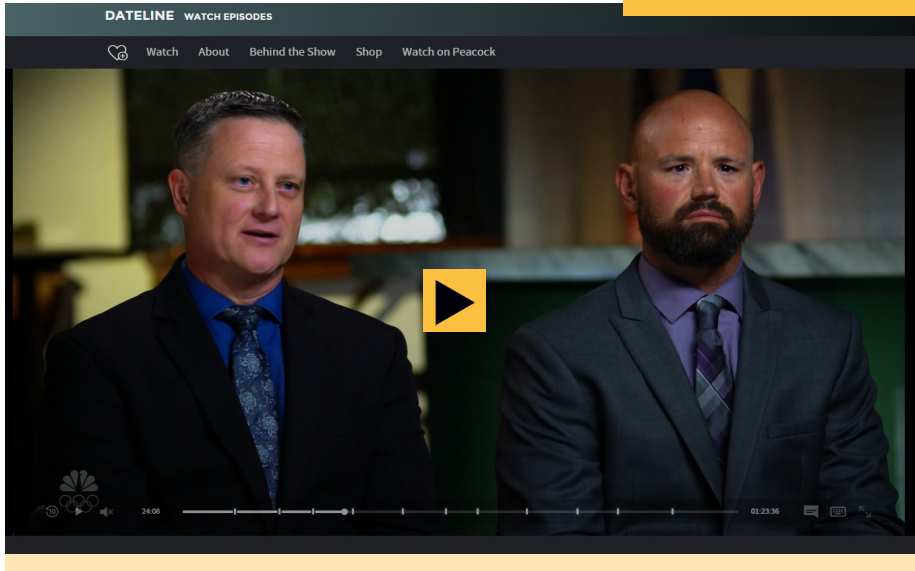
INMATE PEER SUPPORT
TCSO has partnered with [Via Hope](#) to provide our inmate population with Peer Support Interns who will gain the experience required to become fully certified Peer Support Specialists. Peer Interns will work under the supervision of the TCSO Behavioral Health Department and meet with inmates via one-on-one or group sessions. Through sharing their own lived experiences with mental illness, justice involvement, and/or substance use, they offer a unique perspective that educates, advocates, and provides trauma-informed support. Peer Interns are employed around the community and have proven vital to the recovery process.

READ MORE



K9 RETIREMENT
It's bittersweet to announce the retirement of Travis County Corrections K9 Reya. The sweet and rambunctious Reya has been serving with TCSO since 2017. And while we're certain she would have loved to continue working for many more years to come, her veterinarian has issued a professional recommendation that she retire from her position in law enforcement and enjoy her remaining years more comfortably. TCSO has initiated the internal process of finding her forever home and we wish her a happy retirement full of treats, belly rubs and unlimited toys to chase.

TCSO GOES PRIMETIME



This month, a capital murder case investigated by TCSO was featured on both NBC's "Dateline" and CBS's "48 Hours." The episodes, respectively titled "Ghosts Can't Talk" and "Shootout at the Shaughnessys," shine a light on the efforts of Detective Paul Salo and Sergeant James Moore in the investigation of the murder of Austin-area jeweler Ted Shaughnessy. This was an exceptional case that was investigated exceptionally well, which is what attracted these national network shows to seek TCSO's involvement. There were many who contributed their professional skills to the case, and it was a unique privilege to see their work highlighted on national broadcasts.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION
On January 19, TCSO hosted its annual [Victim Services Unit](#) annual Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of those volunteers who went above and beyond during the previous year. In 2023, volunteers took approximately 1,863 shifts, totaling 7,452 hours and assisting nearly 3,000 victims. Awards were given to a Rookie of the Year (Julie London, VA 67), Most Shifts Taken (Kathy Broussard, VA 45) and Volunteer of the Year (Mark Doherty, VA 55). An award for Law Enforcement of the Year was also presented to Deputy Brittany Acosta in appreciation of her consistent and dedicated service.

MORE INFO

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

HOTLINE 1-888-373-7888

Did you know January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month? Since 2010, the month is recognized nationally to help raise awareness about human trafficking and to educate the public about how to [identify and prevent such a crime](#). If you see something, it's always important to say something – as there is always someone who is willing to lend a helping hand.

If you or someone you know is danger here in Travis County, you can contact the TCSO Vice Unit Tip Line at 512-854-7425 or submit an [online tip](#). The National Human Trafficking Hotline can be reached at 1-888-373-7888.



RETIRED TEACHERS VISIT
On January 12, Sheriff Hernandez was invited to the [Austin Retired Teacher's Association's](#) monthly meeting, where its members enjoyed discussing criminal justice issues faced by society. These life-long learners asked interesting and important questions of the sheriff and shared some inspirational information of their own. It turns out a few of TCSO's current employees were taught and mentored by the retirees. They are a shining example of the power of education and kindness.

ROTARY CLUB RECOGNITION

On January 16, the [Rotary Club of Austin](#) hosted its inaugural Four-Way Test Public Safety Award ceremony, which was created to recognize and support public safety practices that build trust and goodwill between law enforcement and vulnerable communities.

Sergeant Marc Taub was chosen to receive the award for his years of exceptional service to Travis County. Among this year's nominees were Inmate Mental Health and CES Director Danny Smith, Nurse Brianna Cliatt, and Senior Deputy Charles Williams. Congratulations to all of these deserving honorees!



COMMUNITY TOWN HALL



On January 29, TCSO hosted a virtual town hall for the residents of Rivercreek in Austin's Colony. We appreciated the community reaching out to us to discuss a variety of neighborhood safety topics. It's this ongoing dialogue and partnership with Travis County residents that keeps our communities safer.

If your neighborhood is interested in a community meeting and/or a neighborhood safety presentation, please contact our [Community Outreach Unit](#).

