



St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office
Steven A. Hall, Sheriff
23150 Leonard Hall Drive, Leonardtown, MD 20650



NEWS RELEASE

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Warns of "Notice of Hearing" Text Scam Impersonating District Court

LEONARDTOWN, MD (March 18, 2026) - The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is warning residents about a scam in which individuals receive text messages falsely claiming to be a "Notice of Hearing – Traffic Violation" from a District Court.

Recently, residents reported receiving a text message that appeared to be an official court notice, alleging an outstanding traffic violation and directing the recipient to scan a QR code to resolve the matter. The message created a sense of urgency and implied potential legal consequences if immediate action was not taken.

These messages are fraudulent and are designed to trick individuals into clicking on malicious links or providing personal and financial information.

The Sheriff's Office reminds residents that official court notices are **not served through unsolicited text messages**. Legitimate communications regarding court hearings or traffic violations are delivered through official mail or in person, and courts do not request payments or sensitive information via text.

Residents are encouraged to take the following precautions:

- Do not click on links, open QR codes, or respond to unexpected text messages claiming to be from a court or government agency.
- Do not provide personal, financial, or identifying information in response to unsolicited messages.
- Verify any concerns by contacting the court directly using a trusted phone number or official website, not the contact information provided in the message.

Members of the general public who have questions about potential scams like this can contact the Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division hotline at 410-528-8662 or toll-free 888-743-0023.

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SCAM

**⚠ Courts
 do NOT text
 payment
 requests**

