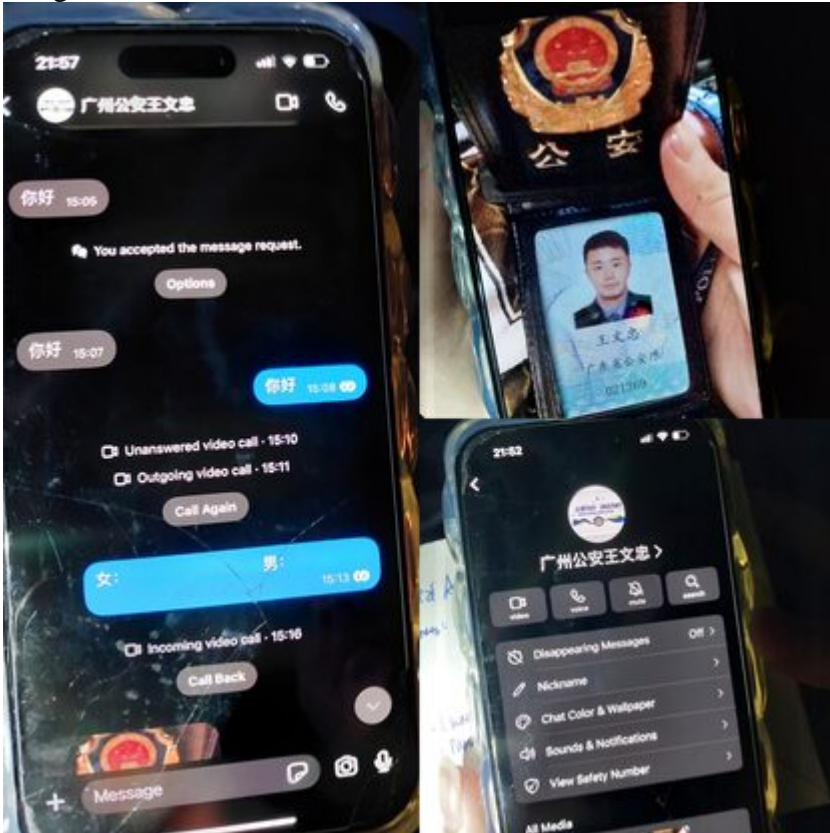


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San Francisco Police Department Warns Chinese Community of Scammers Posing as Police Officers from China 25-041

Image



March 27, 2025 | 12:30 PM

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The San Francisco Police Department is warning members of the Chinese Community about recent identity theft scams targeting them. In March, SFPD received multiple reports from members of the Chinese community about individuals impersonating local health care providers, federal employees, and foreign police officers, claiming to be from cities located in China.

Victims generally reported that they received a phone call from a number, which appeared to be from a health care provider. Upon picking the phone call, the suspects, who claimed to be employees of the provider's insurance claim department, asked the victims whether they had undergone a surgical procedure in China recently.

When the victims replied that they did not receive any surgical treatment in China, the scammers then told the victims that someone had submitted their personal information like birth date, ID number, address and more, to submit a fraudulent claim. The suspects then transferred the calls to other suspects, who claimed to be police officers from a city in China. The suspects claimed they wanted to file police reports for the victims' compromised personal information.

In some cases, the victims talked on a video call to other suspects dressed in Chinese police officers' uniforms with a background resembling a police station in China. The victims were instructed to download communications applications like Signal or Skype for texts, voice calls and video calls to discuss the alleged fraud further.

Although largely similar, some details of these reported incidents vary as scammers use different ways to convince victims.

In one incident, a suspect posing as a police officer from a city in China also sent victims a photo of a Chinese police identification card allegedly from the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department and spoke Mandarin with the victims during the video call.

In another incident, a suspect posed as a Mandarin-speaking Federal Communications Commission (FCC) employee. The suspect then connected the victim to several suspects posing as different Chinese police officers in multiple Chinese cities to convince the victim to send \$23,000 to clear the victim's name from the crime. The victim subsequently sent money through wire transfer, but later became suspicious and contacted SFPD.

SFPD is urging community members to safeguard their personal information, including name, date of birth, Social Security number, passport number, bank account and credit card numbers, and other sensitive personal information.

Caller ID spoofing is when deliberately falsified information is transmitted to a caller ID display to disguise a person's identity. When in doubt, hang up or end the voice or video call immediately.

"We want to spread the word to our Chinese community about these horrendous scammers attempting to take advantage of our community members," said SFPD Chief Bill Scott. "The SFPD is working diligently to identify the perpetrators and bring justice to victims. I want to thank the victims for coming forward and alerting police about these incidents. Please be wary of any person asking for money or personal information whom you do not know, and contact SFPD if you are suspicious of any activity like this."

Calling the Police

When calling or working with SFPD, residents may use simple English to state their preferred language of service, such as "Cantonese," "Mandarin," or "Toisanese."

- Call 9-1-1 for crimes in progress
- Reports can be made at any SFPD District Station

- Call Dispatch at [\(415\) 553-0123](tel:(415)553-0123) and request an officer to take a report.
- Cantonese speakers can leave tips on a special tip line by calling [\(415\) 553-9212](tel:(415)553-9212) or [1-855-737-3847](tel:1-855-737-3847)
- Information can also be called into the Anonymous Tip Line at [\(415\) 575-4444](tel:(415)575-4444) or via *Text a Tip* by texting a message to [TIP411](tel:TIP411) and beginning the message with SFPD.

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