



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

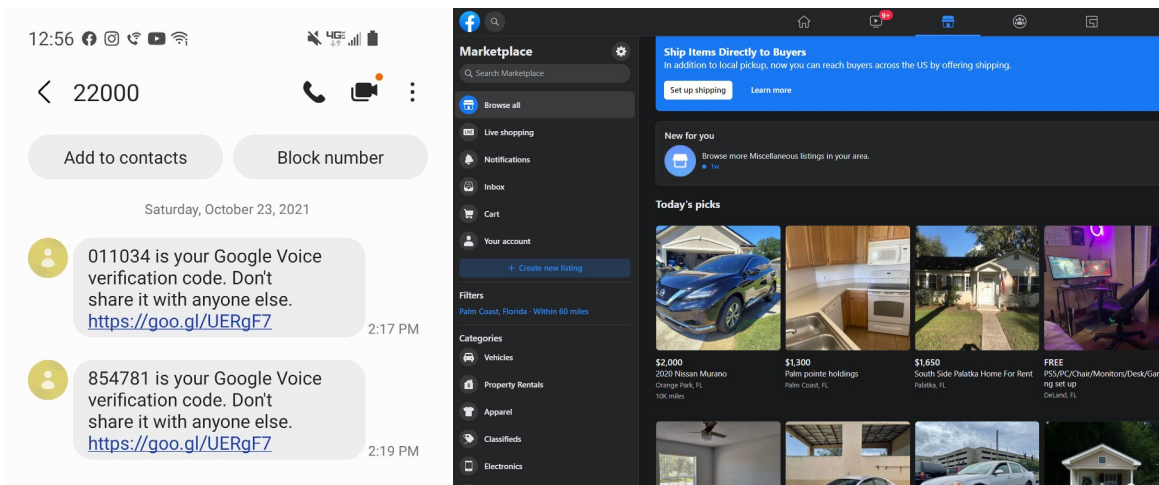
NEWS RELEASE

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New "Google Voice Scam" Surfaces in Flagler County, Sheriff Urges Residents to Beware

The Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) would like to make residents aware of a new type of scam circulating call the "Google Voice Scam." This scam targets people who are trying to make extra income selling items online.

In 2021, selling items online became a new trend as opposed to having traditional garage sales. But many sellers diverted from platforms like eBay due to shipping costs, utilizing newer platforms such as Facebook Marketplace, "Swip Swap" sites, and Craigslist.



The "Google Voice Scam" is easy to fall for as the scam is presented similarly as an online sale. Typically, a few minutes to an hour after an item is posted, the scammer will reach out to the poster and ask if the item is still available. The scammer generally reaches out via Facebook Messenger, advising the seller that they would like to purchase the item. The scammer will then tell the seller that they need to ensure the seller is not a scammer, and the scammer will ask for the seller's cell phone number to verify via text. Once the scammer has the seller's number, they will send the seller a

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“Google Voice Mail.” While the message itself will instruct the seller not to share it with anyone else, the scammer will ask for it specifically. The purpose of this scam is so the scammer can get access to the seller’s information and use it for identity theft, and tie the seller’s information to future scams.

“Unfortunately, some people would rather spend their time trying to con people out of their hard-earned money and identity theft rather than make an honest living,” Sheriff Rick Staly said. “With the recent incidents of scammers finding new ways to steal money from residents, we want to ensure Flagler County residents are aware of these scams and how to protect themselves.”

The Identity Theft Resource Center and the Federal Trade Commission offer many up-to-date resources for citizens and consumers. Visit <https://www.idtheftcenter.org/google-voice-scam-tries-to-trick-you-while-you-are-selling-items-online/> or <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts/> to learn how you can avoid scams and what to do if you believe you are a victim.

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