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NEWS RELEASE

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District Attorney Warns the Public of Phishing Scheme Targeting Welfare Recipients

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko warns the public to be aware of a phishing scam targeting county residents who collect welfare benefits through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards.

This scam targets people via text message claiming a problem exists with the EBT card. The victim is directed to call a phone number included in the text message. During the call, the victim is asked to furnish the EBT account information and PIN to verify their account. After acquiring this personal information, a fraudster duplicates the EBT card and steals the victim's welfare funds.

Tips to avoid being a victim of this scam include:

- Do not share your EBT card or account information with anyone.
- If you did not initiate the communication regarding a problem with your financial account, immediately terminate the communication and contact the financial institution at the telephone number located on the back of your EBT card.
- The Ventura County Human Services Agency does not make contact via text message and would never request access to EBT accounts in this fashion.
- Any solicitation of EBT information should be reported to the District Attorney's Welfare Fraud Hotline at (805) 477-1605.

We need your help in bringing these criminals to justice and preventing others from becoming victims.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 290 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.