

# OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF KANSAS

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### DISTRICT ATTORNEY MARC BENNETT ISSUES COMMUNITY WARNING FOLLOWING DOJ REPORT CITING \$2 BILLION IN LOSSES TO ELDER FRAUD

**WICHITA, Kan.** — Sedgwick County District Attorney Marc Bennett is urging residents to remain vigilant against financial scams targeting seniors, following the release of a startling new report by the U.S. Department of Justice.

The “2025 Annual Report to Congress on Department of Justice Activities to Combat Elder Fraud and Abuse” reveals the staggering scope of financial exploitation targeting older adults in the United States. According to the report, thieves attempted to steal or succeeded in stealing more than \$2 billion from over 1 million older Americans during the reporting period.

“The figures released in this report are a reminder of the pervasiveness of elder financial abuse,” Bennett said. “While this is a national report, the threat is local. These sophisticated criminal networks do not discriminate by location, and we want to ensure the citizens of Sedgwick County are aware of the scale of this problem so they can better protect themselves and their loved ones.”

The DOJ report details that federal litigators pursued more than 280 enforcement actions against over 600 defendants. These perpetrators included both domestic offenders and transnational criminals operating from overseas, many of whom were extradited to face charges in U.S. courts.

| The District Attorney's Office encourages residents to look out for common "red flags" of fraud, which often include:

- **Urgency:** Scammers often claim a situation is an emergency, for example, a grandchild in jail or a compromised bank account, to prevent the victim from thinking clearly or taking the time to ask clarifying questions.
- **Secrecy:** Victims are often told not to tell family members or bank tellers about the withdrawal.
- **Unusual Payment Methods:** Demands for payment via cryptocurrency, gift cards or wire transfers are almost always scams.

"We are putting this information out as a warning," Bennett added. "If you suspect you or an elderly family member has been targeted, please do not stay silent. Reporting these crimes is the first step in stopping them."

**Reporting Suspicious Activity:** If you believe you or a loved one has been a victim of elder fraud, please contact local law enforcement immediately. Additionally, incidents can be reported to the National Elder Fraud Hotline at 1-833-FRAUD-11 (1-833-372-8311).

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