

August 2015

Fraud Alert!

Scam Alert Concerning the Pope's Visit to Philadelphia

Bucks County Consumer Protection wants to warn the residents of Bucks County of the looming scams arising in light of the upcoming papal visit. Catholics, as well as people of many other faiths, are eager to welcome the Pope to the city of Philadelphia this fall; scammers are just as eager to take advantage of the faithful. For many, a chance to see the pope is an opportunity they may never have again, and many followers are willing to pay for access to the pontiff. The problem? There are no tickets for sale.

Scams to look out for:

- **Tickets to see the pope-** *there are no tickets required to see the Pope. "Basically it's an open air event and it's open and free to everyone...With an estimated 1.5 to 2 million people, there's no guarantee you'll even get close to the pope. There should be no one guaranteeing a spot in the e grandstand next to the pope." said spokeswoman Erin Friedlander, Archdiocese of New York "The World Meeting of Families – Philadelphia 2015 will be aggressively monitoring for counterfeit/black market `tickets,'" said Kenneth Gavin, spokesman for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. "If readers are finding tickets on Stub Hub or other such sites, rest assured, these are not legitimate."*

People should regularly check the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for the latest, most accurate news as events are finalized. And as the itinerary is completed, you can also check the web sites of the archdioceses where the pope will be visiting -- Washington, Philadelphia and New York.

- **Train ticket scams-***Due to the lottery system of purchasing tickets that SEPTA has put into place for this event, be very cautious of "tickets for sale" on Craigslist and other websites asking for wire-transfers to order your tickets.*
- **Price gouging-** *Your hotdog should not cost \$20.00. Plan ahead by considering bringing your own food and drink.*
- **Sale of religious memorabilia-** *items for sale claiming to be touched, blessed, or endorsed by the Pope are more than likely not.*
- **Parking scams-** *beware of small private lots near the events and close to the local train stations that will take this opportunity to "make a buck or two". Look for parking in a well-lit, secure location.*

If you believe you may have been scammed, report it to Pennsylvania's Bureau of Consumer Protection at 800-441-2555, or you can file a complaint online at

<https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Quick Links/Pennsylvania Attorney General Complaint Forms/Filing a complaint with the Attorney General s Bureau of Consumer Protection/>

If you should have additional questions relating to this potential for scams, please call Bucks County Consumer Protection at 215-348-6060 or email consumerprotection@buckscounty.org .

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You are also invited to visit Bucks County Consumer Protection's web page

<http://www.buckscounty.org/government/communityservices/ConsumerProtection>

Monthly Fraud Alerts brought to you by:

BUCKS COUNTY CRIMES AGAINST OLDER ADULTS TASK FORCE

Bucks County District Attorney's Office

215-348-6344

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging

215-348-0510

Bucks County Coroner's Office

215-348-3852

Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA)

1-800-675-6900

A Woman's Place (AWP)

1-800-220-8116

Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection

215-348-6060

Bucks County Register of Wills

215-348-6265

US Dept. of Health and Human Services/OIG

1-800-447-8477

www.crimesagainstolderadultsbucks.org

24 - HOUR HOTLINE: 1-800-490-8505