



NEWS RELEASE

Chicago Police Department

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Chicago Police Arrest Four People Targeting Elderly Hispanic Victims with Lottery Ticket Scam

CHICAGO - Chicago Police arrested and charged two men and two women, this past Tuesday and Wednesday, who preyed upon elderly Hispanic victims with promises of winning lottery tickets in exchange for a large sum of money.

John Garcia, 30, of the 4700 block of S. Karlov Avenue was charged with three counts of theft by deception and one count of attempted theft by deception.

William Velasquez-Ortiz, 43, of the 2000 block of N. Milwaukee Avenue was charged with one count of theft by deception and two counts of attempted theft by deception.

Janet Cruz, 39, of the 3200 block of W. Lawrence Avenue was charged with three counts of theft by deception and Carmen Perez-Santiago, 62, of the 3200 block of W. Lawrence was charged with one count of theft by deception.

The group worked as a team and fanned out across Chicago as they typically targeted elderly Hispanic victims at stores and on the street.

Two of the offenders would often approach the victim and one of the offenders would explain that they possessed a winning lottery ticket with a value of more than one-million dollars. The offender would then mention that he or she is an illegal immigrant and is offering to share the winnings only if the elderly victim would surrender money in good faith.

The offender would then persuade the victim to turnover a large sum of money, ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000, and/or jewelry with the promise that the victim would share in the substantial lottery winnings.

The offenders would then accept the victim's money or valuables and flee the area, leaving the victim empty-handed.

Approximately five victims sustained a combined loss of approximately \$110,000. The offenders also attempted to defraud two additional victims of \$50,000.

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