



Los Angeles County  
District Attorney's Office

# Blessing Scam

Seniors with deep religious or spiritual beliefs, particularly those in immigrant communities, should be aware of a hoax that exploits those ideas and can result in the loss of cash and valuables.

The Blessing Scam is a con in which an elderly person is promised a blessing or spiritual healing by putting valuable items and cash in a bag that is then secretly swapped for an empty bag. The scam is particularly prevalent in the Chinese community.

Fraudsters working in a group will pretend to not know each other and befriend and sometimes corner the victim. They will ask personal questions that they then secretly transmit to a so-called spiritual doctor or psychic. The supposed spiritual advisor will then casually show up and use the information gathered to convince the senior of his or her psychic abilities.

The crook will then convince the victim that a terrible misfortune awaits the senior or a family member unless a blessing ceremony is performed by putting money in a bag, which the scammer switches with another bag.



## HELPFUL TIPS

- **Talk to family members before agreeing to any spiritual help that involves providing valuables or personal information.**
- **If anyone approaches offering to bless items or warns of impending doom, leave immediately and call police.**
- **Travel with someone whenever possible and keep a lookout for people unusually interested in getting to know you.**

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**If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam, please contact your local law enforcement agency.**

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<http://da.lacounty.gov/community/fraud-alerts>

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