

**Recap from the  
Community Meeting on Mail and Package Theft  
August 25, 2016**

Thank you all for attending the Community Meeting on Mail and Package Theft on Thursday, August 25, 2016. Thank you to our host, The Windward School and to our special guests:

**Adrian Acosta**, Senior Lead Officer, Los Angeles Police Department, Pacific Division  
**Kenneth Ahn**, Constituent Services Representative, Office of United States Representative Karen Bass  
**Claudia Aragon**, Constituent Services Representative, Office of United States Representative Karen Bass  
**Angel Gomez**, Burglary Detective, Los Angeles Police Department, Pacific Division  
**Gerardo Ramirez**, Inspector, United States Postal Inspection Service, Los Angeles Office  
**Lee Versoza**, Inspector, United States Postal Inspection Service, Los Angeles Office

I know I walked away from the meeting with a greater understanding of the issues, the actions being taken, and – more importantly – what we can all do to minimize our chances of becoming targets.

The very first thing we can all do is remove opportunities: Repair or replace faulty locks, replace mail boxes with mail slots, consider adding high-definition video cameras, require signatures for all deliveries, watch for your neighbors' packages, and never leave packages out overnight. If opportunities exist; thieves will capitalize upon them. To that end, the Postal Service is working on a redesign of the blue mail bins and changing mailbox lock (master) technology. When complete, these are expected to result in a reduction of mail thefts.

Sometimes, despite all our due diligence, thefts still do occur. Report all thefts no matter how small. When crimes aren't reported, patrol resources are directed elsewhere. Failure to report thefts results in inability to prosecute crimes after the fact. LAPD is required to take reports of all thefts. Keep in mind that LAPD burglary detectives are each handling 30 to 40 active cases at any given time. So, despite a clear desire, the resources may not be there to pursue every case.

Mail thefts, including phishing, are special cases because they're very serious federal offenses (up to 5 years in federal prison for mail theft or phishing; up to 10 years in federal prison for unauthorized possession of an arrow key). Mail thefts and phishing should be reported both to LAPD and the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS). Please do not report mail thefts to your local post office; it's not the same thing. Also, remember that thefts of anything other than U.S. Mail are within LAPD's sole jurisdiction.

One currently cannot file a police report remotely or on-line. A visit to the police station is required. The address is:

LAPD Pacific Station  
12312 Culver Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90066

If it's USPS mail, then it's highly likely that the Postal Inspection Service will need to get involved. An on-line report can be filed at <https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov/>

You should know that LAPD refers all mail theft cases to the USPIS. Though there are only ~1,200 Postal Inspectors for the entire country, USPIS will refer all actionable cases to the United States Attorney for prosecution. Since our meeting, I learned that our guests from both agencies have been talking about ways of working together on this very important issue. We should all be pleased about this progress.

Finally, even though the intent of the meeting was to discuss theft, it's obvious that many stakeholders have issues with incorrectly delivered mail, etc. For these issues, it's best to ask for help from your United States Representative. In the case of the 37<sup>th</sup> district, that's Karen Bass. Below is the contact info for her office:

**Claudia Aragon | Constituent Services Representative**

4929 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90010

<https://bass.house.gov/>

e-mail: [claudia.aragon@mail.house.gov](mailto:claudia.aragon@mail.house.gov)

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Finally, we on the Committee on Public Safety hope everyone found the meeting informative. Please consider becoming involved with the committee. It meets at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Coffee Connection, 3838 S. Centinela Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90066. Agendas, meeting minutes, etc. can be found at <http://www.marvista.org/committees/safety>