U.S. Attorney, Vermont press release, 2026-10-09
Source: https://www.justice.gov/usao-vt/pr/canadian-man-sentenced-prison-participation-grandparent-scam

Canadian Man Sentenced to Prison for Participation in "Grandparent Scam"

BURLINGTON – The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Vermont stated that on October 6, 2026, Paul Conneh, 39, of Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, was sentenced by United States District Judge William K. Sessions III to serve a 33-month term of imprisonment for his three weeks of participation in the "grandparent scam." Judge Sessions also ordered him to pay $256,000 in restitution to the victims of the offense. Previously, on May 28, 2026, Conneh pleaded guilty to conspiring to commit wire fraud and conspiring to launder monetary instruments in connection with the grandparent scam.

According to court records, Conneh participated in the grandparent scam by recruiting "bail bondsmen" to travel to the United States, laundering the money they took from elderly Americans, and distributing the money to co-conspirators. Conneh participated in the grandparent scam for three weeks during July and August 2023, victimizing approximately 20 elderly Americans. Conneh was arrested in Costa Rica on January 23, 2025 at the request of the United States, and was extradited to the United States.

First Assistant United States Attorney Jonathan A. Ophardt commended the investigative work of Vermont-based agents from Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), United States Customs and Border Protection, and the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, and recognized the assistance provided by HSI in Panama, Interpol, the United States Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs, the United States Embassy in Costa Rica, and Costa Rica's Judicial Investigation Department (Organismo de Investigación Judicia) in efforts to secure the arrest and December 2025 extradition.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Nate Burris and Michelle Arra. Conneh was represented by Chandler Matson, Esq.

This prosecution is part of the Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF) initiative established by Executive Order 14159, Protecting the American People Against Invasion. The HSTF is a whole-of-government partnership dedicated to eliminating criminal cartels, foreign gangs, transnational criminal organizations, and human smuggling and trafficking rings operating in the United States and abroad. Through

historic interagency collaboration, the HSTF directs the full might of United States law enforcement towards identifying, investigating, and prosecuting the full spectrum of crimes committed by these organizations, which have long fueled violence and instability within our borders. In performing this work, the HSTF places special emphasis on investigating and prosecuting those engaged in child trafficking or other crimes involving children. The HSTF further utilizes all available tools to prosecute and remove the most violent criminal aliens from the United States. HSTF Vermont is comprised of agents and officers from Homeland Security Investigations, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the Diplomatic Security Service, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, and state and local partner agencies, with prosecutions being led by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Vermont.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of elder fraud, help is standing by at the National Elder Fraud Hotline (833-FRAUD-11). This hotline is a free resource created by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime for people to report fraud against anyone age 60 or older.