

Protecting Yourself Against Check Fraud

If you can answer "YES" to any of the following questions, proceed cautiously, it could be check fraud.

- Is the CHECK from an item you sold on the Internet, such as a car, boat, jewelry, etc.?
- Is the amount of the CHECK more than the item's selling price?
- Did you receive the CHECK via an overnight delivery service?
- Is the CHECK connected to communicating with someone by email?
- Is the CHECK drawn on a business or individual account that is different from the person buying your item or product?
- Have you been informed that you were the winner of a LOTTERY or international sweepstakes that you did not buy a ticket to enter?
- Have you been instructed to either WIRE, SEND, or SHIP MONEY as soon as possible to a large U.S. city or another country?
- Have you been asked to PAY money to receive a deposit from another country?
- Are you receiving PAY or a COMMISSION for facilitating money transfers through your account?
- Did you respond to an email requesting you to CONFIRM, UPDATE, or PROVIDE your account information?

Counterfeit Cashier's Checks

Just because it is a cashier's check, do not assume that it is safe. Cashier's checks are counterfeited almost as often as currency and personal checks. Counterfeit cashier's checks are often used in scams to gain the victim's trust.

Counterfeiting Your Accounts

Another type of check fraud is when the scammer counterfeits your personal checks and therefore assumes your identity to make purchases.

Best Practices

- If you cash or deposit a cashier's check that is later found to be counterfeit, YOU are responsible for returning those funds to the bank where it was cashed. If it is questionable, ask the teller before you cash or deposit it.
- Just because a bank teller cashes a cashier's check does not mean that it is good. Even if it is found to be counterfeit weeks later, you are responsible for returning the funds. Be especially wary of cashier's checks that appear to be from banks outside your local area.
- Do not respond to unsolicited emails.
- Be suspicious of cashier's checks that appear to come from a Canadian bank or another country.
- If a cashier's check is suspicious, call the issuing bank to verify it. Do not use information printed on the check to contact the bank, instead ask your bank or directory assistance for help in locating the legitimate phone number.
- If accepting a personal check or cashier's check of which you are suspicious, consider asking the giver to put their thumbprint on the check itself. This will help law enforcement later if the check turns out to be bogus.
- Safeguard your account numbers. Guard your checks very closely. If you must store unsured checks, do so safely. Never just throw away unused checks, always burn or shred them.
- Report lost or stolen checks immediately.
- Guard your PIN and ATM receipts. Shred old cards and receipts.
- Use OVB Bill Pay to eliminate paper bills coming to your mailbox. These bills often include account numbers. Stealing mail is a common method that scammers use to steal your identity.
- Remember, if it seems too good to be true, it probably is a scam. Be skeptical if you are told that you won a sweepstakes or foreign lottery. Be cautious in every financial deal you make.

If you feel that you may be a victim of check fraud, report it immediately to your local authorities and your financial institution(s).

Please call Ohio Valley Bank at 800-468-6682 or email callcenter@ovbc.com if you have any questions.