



DON'T GET LEFT holding a FAKE CHECK

We're seeing a steep rise in the number of check scams. Below are some of the most common.

In all cases, the scammer hopes to receive their payment before the fraudulent cashier's check is detected.



Lottery & Inheritance SCAMS

Check recipients are told they won a lottery (often in a foreign country) or they are receiving an inheritance. In order to "claim" their winnings or inheritance, the recipient must first pay "taxes and fees." A fraudulent cashier's check is sent. The scammer asks the recipient to cash the check and wire funds back to the sender to cover taxes and fees.

Work-at-Home Employment SCAMS

Scammers advertise a job and claim to be "hiring" people to work from home. The "employee" receives an official but fraudulent cashier's check as a starting bonus and is asked to cover the cost of "account activation."

Online Auctions, Classified Listing & Overpayment SCAMS

Scammers go to an online auction and offer to buy an item for sale, pay for a service in advance or rent an apartment. They send a fraudulent cashier's check that's higher than the asking price. They apologize for their mistake and ask the payee to quickly return the extra funds.

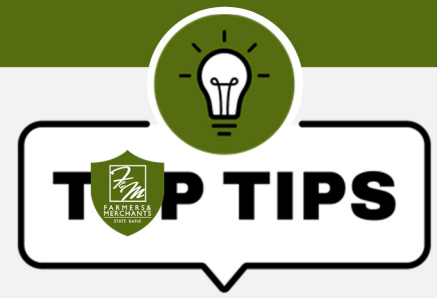
Secret Shopper SCAMS

A person is offered to work from home as a secret shopper. The "employee" is sent a fraudulent cashier's check and instructed to deposit it in their bank account and withdraw the amount in cash. They are then asked to use a local money transfer business to send the funds back to the "employer" and "evaluate" the service provided by the money transfer business.

FAKE
OR
REAL?

FACT:

With today's advanced printers and graphics design capabilities, determining whether a cashier's check or bank check is legitimate is difficult just by physical inspection.



TIPS to Help Prevent Check Fraud:

1. **Make sure the check was issued by a legitimate bank.** FDIC BankFind Suite allows you to locate FDIC-insured banking institutions in the United States.
2. **Call the bank that supposedly issued the check to verify the check.** Make sure you look up the phone number on the bank's official website and don't use the phone number printed on the check (that could be a phone number controlled and answered by the scam artist). They will likely need to know the check number, issuance date, and amount. Be aware that the bank in question may not confirm or talk to you.
3. **Consider how and why you received the check.** If someone you don't know initiated the payment, be skeptical and proceed cautiously. If something seems "odd" or "off," trust your gut.
4. **Scammers often communicate with their victims via e-mail or text message.** Their communications may contain misspelled words and grammatical errors.
5. **Look where the check was mailed from--**if the postmark is not the same as the city and state of the issuing bank, it might be an indication the check is fake. Be especially cautious if it was mailed from overseas.
6. **Determine if the amount of the check is correct and what you are expecting.** Fake checks are often made out for more than the agreed upon amount.
7. **Official checks usually contain watermarks, security threads, color-changing ink and other security features.** While scammers are able to sometimes copy these security features, the quality is often poorly executed.

What We Do if We *Suspect* a Check is Fake



If we suspect a check is counterfeit, we will:

- Refuse to cash a check or accept it for deposit OR
- Place a hold on the deposited balance based on "reasonable doubt"

If the check turns out to be fraudulent, a returned item fee of \$4 will be charged—which is small in comparison to what may have been lost had the fake check been cashed/deposited.

We're Here
to *Help* →

Learn more on the resources page
of our website at FMPierz.com.



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