Actual Trust Account Fraud Cases

Often the fraudster uses email addresses and domains identical to those of the actual attorney and will even use their company logo.

- Fraudster intercepts buyer's and/or seller's email to their realtor or attorney. Fraudster pretends to be the buyer or seller and inserts their wiring instructions to the attorney. Funds are wired to the fraudster's account.
- Fraudster impersonates attorney or realtor (they even use the names of the actual employees) and emails the buyer instructing them to wire the funds needed for closing to a fraudulent account.
- Fraudster impersonates seller and tells attorney they want their sale proceeds to be wired to a fraudulent account.

**DOs**

- Buyers – before you wire funds, call your attorney to verbally confirm their wiring instructions.
- Sellers – before funds are wired to you, call your attorney to verbally confirm your wiring instructions.
- Call your attorney immediately if you receive an email stating their wiring instructions have changed or they want you to wire funds to a different account.
- Carefully examine email addresses from your real estate agent and attorney to ensure they are correct. If an email seems suspicious, notify your real estate agent or attorney immediately.
- Carefully review your personal information on your transaction paperwork to ensure it is correct.
- Communicate or confirm any changes to the transaction with your real estate agent or attorney over the phone or in person.
- Contact your attorney or real estate agent if you suspect your email address is being improperly used or if you do not receive funds in a timely fashion.
- Use encrypted email to communicate sensitive information.

**DON’Ts**

- Do not provide information about yourself or your transaction to any unknown or unnecessary parties.
- Do not assume email is safe.
- Do not assume that an email or attachment is safe just because it has the same letterhead as your realtor, attorney, or title company.
- Do not wire your funds or give your wiring instructions to an attorney without calling them to verbally confirm your correct account information.

Visit invtitle.com/fraud for crucial information about wire fraud and cyber crime.