



Counterfeit Cheque Fraud

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Counterfeit Cheque Fraud

The information contained within this alert is based on the results of research carried out by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). The purpose of this alert is to inform the public of the continued targeting of small and medium business with counterfeit cheque fraud.

ALERT

Businesses are being contacted for the sale of goods or services by fraudsters, who request to pay by cheque. The fraudster sends a cheque with a higher value than the amount expected, and then sends the business a request for the difference with instructions on how it should be paid back. This is usually by bank transfer or through a money transfer service, such as Western Union or PaySafe. Once the 'refund' has been provided, it is realised that the cheque provided was fraudulent and no funds are credited to the business's account.

The NFIB has seen an increase of 84% in the number of counterfeit cheque frauds reported to Action Fraud since November 2015. Criminals are targeting a wide range of services including paintings or other artwork, photography and lessons, with various amounts requested to be refunded. The average amount requested to be refunded is £1,818. The highest amount requested was over £80,000.

The suspects have used pressure tactics to persuade victims to refund the amounts immediately prior to the cheques clearing.

PROTECTION / PREVENTION ADVICE

Crime Prevention Advice

- Be cautious of payments where the amount provided is higher than expected. Refuse to provide the service unless the correct balance is received or wait until the cheque has cleared before refunding the difference.
- Always contact banks on a trusted number found on their website or correspondence that is known to be authentic to confirm whether the cheque has cleared.
- Do not feel pressured to provide a refund before the cheque has cleared.

If you have been affected by this, or any other scam, report it to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040, or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk

FEEDBACK

The NFIB needs feedback from our readers to evaluate the quality of our products and to inform our priorities. Please would you complete the following NFIB feedback survey through: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FeedbackSDU>. This should take you no more than 2 minutes to complete. If you have other feedback or additional information that you would prefer to provide by email please send to NFIBfeedback@cityoflondon.pnn.police.uk.