

## Be Aware of Email Spoofing

**EMAIL SPOOFING** is the forgery of an email so the message appears to be sent from someone other than the actual source. Email spoofing is a tactic used in “phishing” and “spam” campaigns. The goal is to get you to open the email and possibly respond to it.

These spoofing scams have become very sophisticated. In the real estate industry, wire fraud is on the rise due to email spoofing and other criminal tactics. We'll do everything we can to eliminate this threat from our customers and clients.



### CALL BACK PROCEDURE

If you receive an email asking you to wire funds to an account, always contact the intended recipient by telephone to verify the validity of the request and the bank account information. Do not use any phone numbers listed in the email. Use a safe and known number to contact the intended recipient.

If you receive a phone call asking you to wire funds and the phone number matches the intended recipient of your funds, do not wire until you have contacted them yourself to verify the information received. These criminals can contact you with “burner phones” that can display any number they want on your called ID.

Be aware that other entities are being targeted as well such as taxing authorities, bank branches, utility companies, bill collectors and more.

**DO NOT GIVE PERSONAL INFORMATION OR SEND ANY FUNDS TO ANYONE  
WITHOUT CALL BACK VERIFICATION.**

# PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENT & OURS

Centerstone Escrow takes the protection of your non-public personal information (NPPI) very seriously. We are a leader in adhering to the strictest security standards. In today's world, it is increasingly important to continue that commitment while fighting cyber fraud and wire fraud. Among our top priorities is eliminating this type of criminal activity.

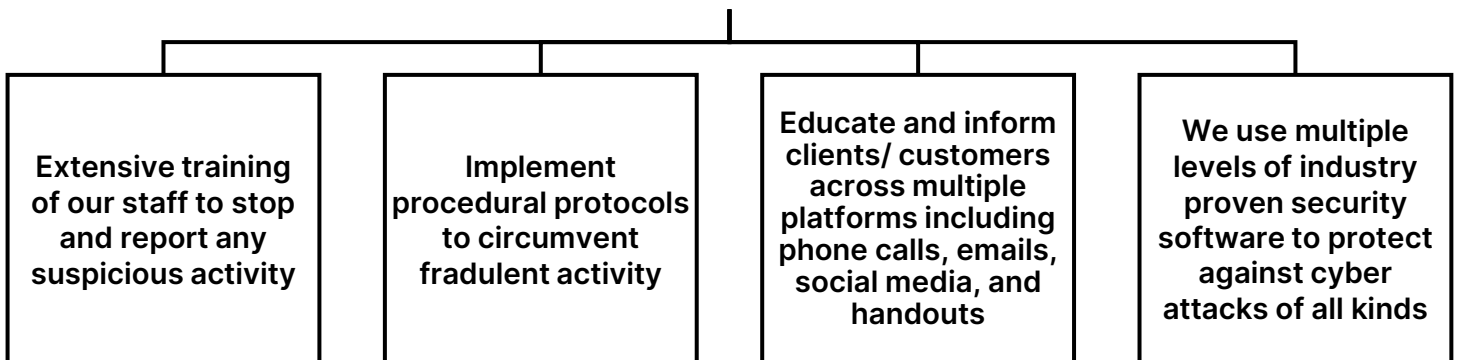


**IN 2021 THERE WAS \$6.9B IN VICTIM LOSSES DUE TO WIRE FRAUD.**



**ACCORDING TO THE FBI, THERE WERE ON AVERAGE 2,300+ DAILY COMPLAINTS RECEIVED ON WIRE FRAUD ACTIVITY IN 2021**

## What We Do



Purchasing a home is a big investment. You can feel secure knowing that we at Centerstone Escrow are doing everything within our power to protect your investment.

**Thank you for choosing & trusting Centerstone Escrow for your real estate transaction!**

# WIRE FRAUD ADVISORY

## PROBLEM

Despite efforts to prevent wire fraud, criminal activity persists in the form of hacked and intercepted emails to buyers and sellers that request funds be wired to parties other than escrows and legitimate bank accounts. These emails can appear legitimate and are often followed by phone calls requesting funds be wired immediately. As a result, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been lost leaving consumers scrambling to retrieve their funds and save their transactions. This has had a devastating effect on many transactions in the real estate industry.

**Please educate your clients and colleagues about wire fraud and how to prevent it.**

## SOLUTION

There are some steps you can take to prevent this from happening to you or your clients.

- Obtain the phone number of the Escrow Officer at the beginning of the transaction. **DO NOT USE ANY OTHER TELEPHONE NUMBER TO CONTACT YOUR ESCROW OFFICER.**
- **DO NOT EVER WIRE FUNDS PRIOR TO CALLING YOUR ESCROW OFFICER TO CONFIRM WIRE INSTRUCTIONS. ONLY USE THE PHONE NUMBER YOU WERE PROVIDED PREVIOUSLY.**
- Verbally **confirm the wire transfer instruction is legitimate** and confirm the bank routing number, account numbers and other codes before taking steps to transfer the funds.
- **Avoid sending personal information in emails or texts.** Provide such information in person or over the telephone directly to the Escrow Officer.
- Take steps to secure the system you are using with your email account. These steps include creating **strong passwords**, using **secure Wi-Fi**, and **not using free services**.

## RED FLAGS

- Receiving emails from **free accounts such as Gmail and Yahoo**. Centerstone Escrow only uses SECURE HOSTED EMAIL SERVICES.
- Wire instructions that ask you to wire to anyone other than Centerstone Escrow or the company you are working with. Centerstone Escrow will only request funds be wired to an escrow or title trust account in the name of our company.
- Emails with phone numbers, addresses, or emails that do not match your escrow company/escrow officer.
- A sudden sense of urgency for you to wire funds.