



# BEWARE OF WIRE FRAUD

According to the FBI, in 2021 victims of email account compromise reported losses of **\$2.396 BILLION.**



The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) receives, on average, **2,300 COMPLAINTS PER DAY.**  
– FBI (2021)

## HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

**FRAUDULENT WIRING** instructions are being sent to real estate agents, title companies and customers.



**BE WARY** of free, web-based email accounts; they are easily hacked.



**ALWAYS VERIFY** changes in payment instructions and confirm requests for transfer of funds.



**CAREFULLY EVALUATE** any requests for secrecy or pressure to take action quickly.



**CALL, DON'T EMAIL:** Confirm all wiring instructions by phone before transferring funds. Use the phone number from the title company's website or a business card.



**BE SUSPICIOUS:** It's not common for title companies to change wiring instructions and payment info.



**CONFIRM IT ALL:** Ask your bank to confirm not just the account number but also the name on the account before sending a wire.



**VERIFY IMMEDIATELY:** You should call the title company or real estate agent to validate that the funds were received. Detecting that you sent the money to the wrong account within 24 hours gives you the best chance of recovering your money.



**FORWARD, DON'T REPLY:** When responding to an email, hit forward instead of reply and then start typing in the person's email address. Criminals use email addresses that are very similar to business email addresses used by legitimate companies. By typing out an email address, you make it easier to discover whether a fraudster is after you.

## IF YOU THINK YOU MIGHT BE A VICTIM:

1



Using a previously known phone number, call the supposed sender of the email to authenticate the change request - don't call the number on the email.

2



If you suspect fraud, immediately notify the financial institutions and escrow agent involved in the transaction.

3



Contact your local law enforcement authorities, and file a complaint with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center.