

WIRE FRAUD ALERT

Buyers and sellers need to exercise extreme caution when wiring funds in real estate transactions.

Criminals/hackers target e-mail, fax, text and social media messenger communications of real estate brokers and sales persons as well as other parties involved in real estate transactions, including mortgage brokers, attorneys, and title companies.

In many cases, these criminals/hackers have been able to intercept emailed wire transfer instructions, obtain account information and, by altering some of the data, use emails to redirect the funds to a different account. These emails are convincing and sophisticated and may look like legitimate emails from parties associated with the transaction.

In each real estate transaction, Buyers and Sellers are advised to:

- Never wire funds without first personally speaking with the intended recipient of the wire to confirm the routing number and account number.
- If you send wiring instructions of any kind via electronic means, verify by telephone or in person that the correct instructions were received by the recipient.
- Verify that the contact information is legitimate. Buyer and seller should call using a phone number that is independently obtained and not use the phone number in an e-mail.
- Do not permit wire instructions to be altered or substituted without your verbal or in person consent.
- Never send personal information such as social security numbers, bank account numbers or credit card numbers, unless it is through secured/encrypted email or personal delivery to the intended recipient.
- Take steps to secure the system you are using with your email account such as using strong passwords and secure WiFi.

If you suspect that you have been victimized by wire fraud or someone is attempting to initiate wire fraud, immediately contact your agent, your mortgage representative, title company, local law enforcement, and the FBI. For more information on wire-fraud scams, to report an incident, or the FBI, please refer to the following links:

FBI: <https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/neworleans>

Internet Crime Complaint Center: <http://www.ic3.gov>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read, understand and received a copy of this Alert.

Buyer or Seller (Please Print) Date

Buyer or Seller (Please Print) Date

Buyer or Seller (Signature) Date

Buyer or Seller (Signature) Date