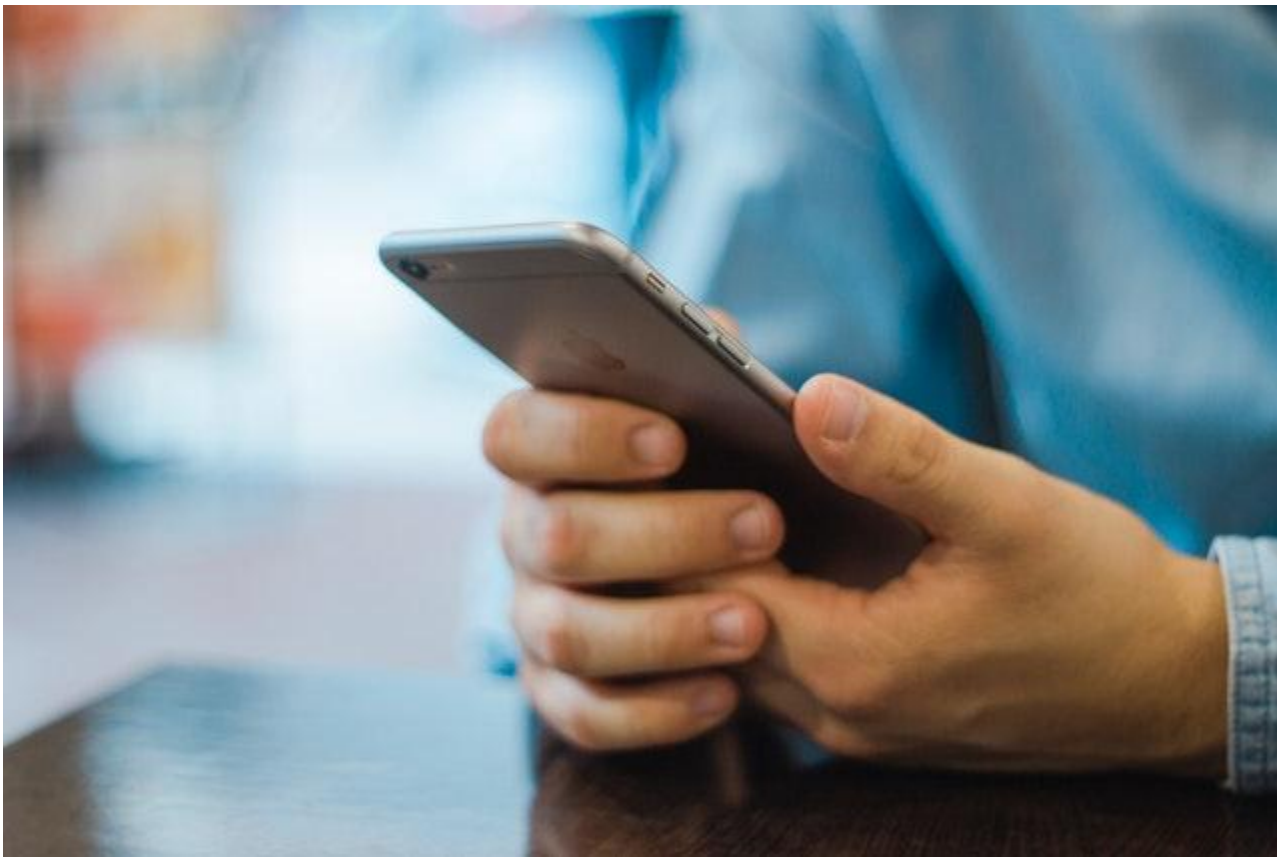


Scammers Posing As Federal Court And Law Enforcement

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ST. LOUIS—The U.S. Attorney's Office and the FBI continue to see scams where perpetrators are posing as federal authorities to scare victims.

In one of the latest examples, the perpetrators emailed a letter claiming to be from a federal court about a federal criminal investigation. The letter gives the victim a choice: (1) face indictment or (2) accept an agreement as a cooperating witness, which requires \$7,000 in legal fees. In addition to the letter, perpetrators also called the victim.

U.S. Attorney Sayler Fleming for the Eastern District of Missouri stated, “Scammers are always looking for ways to take your money or personal information. Anytime you are asked to pay money or give your personal information, be skeptical. Verifying the request can prevent the majority of scams.”

Special Agent in Charge Richard Quinn of the FBI St. Louis Division explained, “Scammers are using more sophisticated techniques to appear legitimate, to include using information about you gleaned from compromised online accounts, such as email or social media. Please scrutinize and verify any request for money or personal information to avoid falling prey to scammers.”

Also, scammers can easily hide their identities by displaying legitimate phone numbers on Caller ID, which is known as spoofing. When in doubt, please take the next step by calling the organization in question. Look up the phone number instead of the number given, then pick up the phone and call the agency, organization, or business to verify. Scammers will do everything, including threaten or create a sense of urgency, to keep you from ending the call.

If you are a victim of a phone or an online scam where you wired money, immediately contact the bank you used to try to recall the wire transfer. Then file an online complaint with the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center (www.IC3.gov).