

SFPD Urges the Public to Stay Vigilant of Fraudulent Internet Applications 24-156

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Over the past four months, SFPD investigators assigned to the Special Victims Unit have come across numerous scams they want the public to be aware of. Many incidents involve large financial scams based around internet applications that have affected several victims throughout San Francisco. Victims have reported receiving emails, text messages, and phone calls prompting them to send large amounts of money through different platforms such as PayPal, Golden Elephant Platform, Proket, and several others.

In several of these incidents, victims receive notification of possible fraudulent charges and or reimbursements being made to their accounts. The victims then receive instructions to deposit funds into an internet application or withdraw funds from their banking accounts that are later picked up by “mail couriers”.

Approximately \$170,000 in US currency and \$50,000 in gold have been acquired fraudulently by multiple unknown suspects over the last few months.

The San Francisco Police Department offers the below Financial Fraud Prevention Tips:

- Exercise caution when prompted with any kind of financial information via computer or text message from an unknown person, phone number, or email address.
- Legitimate financial institutions or investment firms will not advise individuals to withdraw large financial sums and have the funds be picked up by third parties such as “mail couriers”.
- Do not believe that someone is associated with a financial institution without verification.
- Do not provide identification or financial information to someone you do not know or an unidentified person over the phone.
- Be wary of anyone asking you to convert your money into gold bars or any other currency.
- Report suspicious activity.

If you believe you may have been a victim of a financial scam, please immediately report it to your financial institution to prevent further loss and then contact the police department to file a police report in person at any local police station or contact [1-415-553-0123](tel:1-415-553-0123).

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