



WEEKLY FRAUD UPDATE FROM WEST MERCIA POLICE - ECONOMIC CRIME UNIT - 27/02/2024

TICKET FRAUD

With many high-profile concert tours arriving in the coming months, this will give the fraudster another opportunity to scam the unsuspecting purchaser with “*Too good to be true offers*”. This also continues to apply to the many outdoor events and concerts coming up in the summer months too.

Criminals either set up fake websites or social media profiles to sell tickets for major events (such as sports, music or theatre) that are either fraudulent, or just do not exist.

Websites may even look like those of genuine organisations, but subtle changes in the URL can indicate that it is fraudulent. Criminals might have used images of genuine tickets to commit fraud.

They may get in touch via text, email, or direct message to advertise fake tickets. They create fake posts or pages on social media to scam those looking for tickets. You may be sent, or given, tickets only to be told they are fake when you arrive at the venue.

It is always safest to book tickets through official sellers that are members of the self-regulatory body the Society of Ticket Agents and Retailers (STAR), as anything else could be a scam. If possible always pay by Credit Card to give yourself some protection on refunds.

WAYS TO SPOT TICKET FRAUD

- You see an offer for a ticket online, in an email or in a message.
 - You are offered tickets for a high-demand or sold-out event at a “too good to be true” price.
 - You’re asked to pay by bank transfer only, and not via the secure payment methods recommended by reputable online retailers.
 - You are told that a customer representative will be arranged to meet outside the venue.
 - You see a website that looks similar to that of a genuine organisation but there are subtle changes to the URL.
 - As advised previously you can always check any website on <https://www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite> and enter the relevant website address where instructed.
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HMRC Notifications

HMRC are currently sending out notifications of Tax Code changes for the incoming tax year 2024/25. These may come by Post or Email and can apply to many people, including those on State Pensions with other income, given the rise in State Pension in April.

With any email claiming to come from HMRC, always check that it comes from the correct “.gov.uk” email address and if in doubt, do not reply to it or click on any links.. Suspicious emails can be reported to HMRC.

Please feel free to share this information with any family, friends, neighbours.

Take Five to Stop Fraud

STOP: Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

CHALLENGE: Could it be fake? It's OK to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

PROTECT: Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud

ALWAYS REMEMBER:

- Avoid disclosing security details
 - Emails, Phone Calls and Texts may not be authentic
 - Always make direct contact with any organisation by using a genuine phone number
 - Stop and Challenge any unexpected requests
 - Protect others by reporting Fraud and Scams
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If you've fallen for a scam,
report it to **Action Fraud** on **0300 123 2040** or via **actionfraud.police.uk**

Scam Text messages can be forwarded to **7726** to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks.

Forward Fake Emails received to **report@phishing.gov.uk**

If you think your bank account or personal banking details have been used fraudulently, then use the short phone number - **159** - to contact the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks.