What to Know About Cryptocurrency and Scams

- May 4, 2022 2:00 – 3:30 pm
- Speakers include:
  - April Wehrle & Ryan Lippe ~ Ohio Attorney General’s Office
  - Cristina Miranda & Elizabeth Kwok ~ Federal Trade Commission
- Closed captioning are available

Ohio Attorney General’s Office

HOUSEKEEPING

- Today's webinar is being recorded.
- The recorder webinar and copies of the presentations will be posted on the Elder Justice Unit webpage.
  - For questions contact:
    - Sylvia.Pla-Raith@OhioAGO.gov
ELDER JUSTICE UNIT (EJU)

- Attorney General Dave Yost is committed to protecting older Ohioans who are being exploited or harmed.

- The Elder Justice Unit helps protect our state's older adults and enhance elder abuse victims' access to vital criminal justice services.

EJU SERVICES

- Connect victims and others with elder abuse concerns with local and state agencies that may provide resources or guidance.

- Advocate for funding & programming.

- Navigate information and/or referrals to community partners.

- Provide assistance to identify, investigate or prosecute a case.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Develop and distribute educational materials including EJU publications.

- Conducted statewide presentations and forums with older adults and local professionals.

- Since 2014, EJU has;
  - conducted/participated in over 300 trainings,
  - reaching more than 21,420 attendees,
  - also reviewed over 2,500 complaints.
BUILD LOCAL CAPACITY

- Train professionals how to identify and respond to elder abuse.
- Liaison and peer support to state & local partners:
  - BCI
  - Special prosecution
  - Crime victims
  - Healthcare fraud
  - Law enforcement
  - Adult protective services
  - Long term care ombudsman

Ask EJU for Help

Elder Justice - Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost

- File an Elder Justice Unit Complaint
- Request copies of Elder Justice publications
- Request information and/or referrals to community partners
- Request assistance to identify, investigate or prosecute a case
- Request an Elder Justice or Elder Abuse presentation

April Wehrle - Senior Elder Services Coordinator
April.Wehrle@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

Senior Scams

Ryan Lippe
Consumer Protection Section
Ryan.Lippe@OhioAGO.gov
Ohio Attorney General’s Office

What is Consumer Protection?
Ensures a safe marketplace for consumers. Enforces laws related to:
• Buying a vehicle
• Seeing a store advertisement
• Home improvement work

Most Common Complaints (2021)
1. Motor vehicles
2. Shopping, food or beverage
3. Professional services
4. Home or property improvement
5. Collections, credit reporting or financial services
6. Utilities, phone, internet or TV services
Economic Crimes Unit

Helps local authorities identify, investigate, and prosecute consumer fraud of the criminal nature.

Patrick Wilson

Why Are Seniors Targeted?

- Trusting and polite
- More assets
- Less likely to report fraud
- Independent/isolated
Watch for these common tactics:

- Requests for wire-transfers, prepaid money cards, or gift cards
- Requests for personal information
- Pressure to act immediately
- Requests to keep the conversation a secret

Don’t Get Caught in a Scam!

- Guarantee to make money
- Requests for a large down payment
- No contract or nothing written into the contract
- Sending money out of the country

Grandparent Scam

Ask a question.
Confirm with family.
Don’t send money.
Imposter Scam

Don’t trust your caller ID.
Don’t provide personal information.
Call back using a legitimate number.

Prizes/Sweepstakes Scam

Don’t pay advanced fees or taxes to receive a prize.
If you didn’t enter, you probably didn’t win.

Fake Check Scam

Overpayment scam
Work from home scam
Mystery/secret shopper scam
Computer Repair Scam

Never allow remote access to your computer. Remember, callers can’t tell if a computer has a virus.

Relationship Scams

Family/friends scam.
Romance scam.
Social media scams.

Tips for avoiding scams

**ALWAYS:**
- Report illegal robocalls.
- Research businesses and charities.
- Beware of strangers who seek personal connections.
- Keep your personal info private.
- Know that if it’s too good to be true, it probably is!

**NEVER:**
- Send money via suspicious methods.
- Give personal information.
- Carry unnecessary personal info.
- Pay to win a prize.
- Allow stranger “remote access” to your computer.
- Pay the full amount upfront.
Filing a complaint and learning more:

www.OhioProtects.org

Contacting the Ohio Attorney General’s Office

Online: www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov
By phone: 800-282-0515
By mail: Hard-copy forms available

Consumer Resources

Attorney General’s Office
800-282-0515
www.facebook.com/OhioAttorneyGeneral
Twitter: @OhioAG

Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org

Federal Trade Commission
877-382-4357
www.ftc.gov

National Cyber Security Alliance
www.staysafeonline.org

Do Not Call Registry
888-382-1222
www.donotcall.gov

Opt Out Programs
888-567-8688
www.optoutprescreen.com
www.dmachoice.org

Annual Credit Report
877-322-8228
www.annualcreditreport.com

Dept. of Job & Family Services
877-644-6562
www.jfs.ohio.gov

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www.jfs.ohio.gov
What is Cryptocurrency?

- Digital currency that only exists electronically
- You exchange cryptocurrency with someone online, with your phone or computer, without using a bank
- No physical coin or bill unless you use a service that allows you to cash in cryptocurrency for a physical token
Types of Cryptocurrency?

It's not just bitcoin!
- There are many cryptocurrencies, and new ones are continuously being created
- Ether, Dogecoin, XRP, Stellar, Polkadot, etc.

How is Cryptocurrency Different From US Dollars?
- Cryptocurrency accounts are not backed by a government
- Cryptocurrency values change constantly
- Transactions are typically settled between users, without a third-party (e.g., bank) and recorded on a ledger ('blockchain')

How Do People Use Cryptocurrency?
- Investment
- Quick payments
- Avoiding transaction fees regular banks charge
- Aiming for anonymity
How Does Cryptocurrency Work?

Someone requests a transaction. → The requested transaction gets broadcasted to the P2P network consisting of computers. → The network of the computers validates the user's status using known algorithms. → The new block is then added to the existing blockchain, in a way that is permanent and unalterable. → Once verified, the transaction is combined with other transactions to create a new block of data for the ledger.

What is Blockchain?

P2P network

Connected computers...

...reach agreement over...

...shared data.

How Do You Get and Store Cryptocurrency?

Cryptocurrency can be bought through online exchange platforms. Mining

Cryptocurrency is stored in a digital wallet online, on computer, or external hard drive.
How Do You Pay With Cryptocurrency?

- Cryptocurrency payments do not come with legal protections.
- Cryptocurrency payments typically are not reversible.
- Some information about your transactions will likely be public.

How to Avoid Cryptocurrency Scams

Types of Cryptocurrency Scams

- Investment scams
  - Scammers guarantee that you’ll make money
  - Scammers promise big payouts with guaranteed returns
  - Scammers promise free money
  - Scammers make big claims without details or explanations
Types of Cryptocurrency Scams

- Romance scams
- Business and government impersonator scams
- Job scams
- Blackmail emails

Report Cryptocurrency Scams to the FTC

Report Fraud.ftc.gov – English  ReporteFraude.ftc.gov – Spanish

Protect your community by reporting fraud, scams, and bad business practices.

Report Cryptocurrency Scams

Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) at CFTC.gov/complaint

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) at sec.gov/tcr

Cryptocurrency exchange company you used to send the money
Thank you for joining us!

Please spread the word to fight cryptocurrency scams

- [ftc.gov/cryptocurrency]

Get alerts to sign up for the latest cryptocurrency scams

- [ftc.gov/consumeralerts]

Download and share FTC resources

- [consumer.ftc.gov]