CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE BULLETIN

Spoofing

2022-11-24

FRAUD: RECOGNIZE, REJECT, REPORT

This bulletin was prepared to remind the public of a common technique used by fraudsters called spoofing. Spoofing is used by fraudsters to mislead victims and convince them that they are communicating with legitimate companies or organizations.

Below are the main variations of spoofing used by fraudsters:

Caller ID spoofing: Fraudsters have the ability to manipulate the phone number appearing on call display either by call or text message. Fraudsters can display legitimate phone numbers for law enforcement agencies, financial institutions, government agencies or service providers.

Email spoofing: Similar to Caller ID spoofing, fraudsters can manipulate the sender's email address in order to make you believe that the email you're receiving is from a legitimate source.

Website spoofing: Fraudsters will create fraudulent websites that look legitimate. The fake websites can pretend to be a financial institution, company offering employment, investment company or government agency. In many cases, fraudsters will use a similar domain/website URL to the legitimate company or organization with a minor spelling difference.

Warning signs – How to protect yourself

- Never assume that phone numbers appearing on your call display are accurate.
- Never provide personal information to anyone if you receive unsolicited incoming calls, text messages or emails.
- If you receive a phone call claiming to be from your financial institution, service provider, law enforcement or government agency, hang up and make the outgoing call by looking up the official phone number.
- If you receive a text message or email, call the company or agency in question directly.
- Never click on links received via text message or email.
- When visiting a website, always verify the URL and domain to make sure you are on the official website.
- Learn more tips and tricks for protecting yourself from fraud.

Anyone who suspects they have been the victim of cybercrime or fraud should report it to their local police and to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's online reporting system or by phone at 1-888-495-8501. If you were targeted, but did not fall victim, report it to the CAFC anyways.