

Scam alert - Scamster purporting to have paid funds from the LSSA incorrectly into law firm bank account and conveyancing trust account scam



ADVISORY FROM THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) has been informed by law firms of two recent scams.

Scam 1: Scamster purporting to have paid funds from the LSSA incorrectly into law firm bank account and requesting refund

In this scam the caller - 'Antony' - purports to be from the Law Society of South Africa and to have deposited funds incorrectly into the attorneys' firm bank account, and then requests a refund.

We urge attorney to be vigilant and alert to such scams and to inform their bookkeeping staff too.

If you receive such a request, please contact the LSSA Finance Department immediately at (012) 366 8800 to confirm whether this is a legitimate transaction or a scam. Good practice always requires confirmation from the client (telephonic and written) and from the client's bank (stamped original).

Some signs to look out for (see scam letter):

- Incorrect address on the document
- Telephone number is a fax number
- Incorrect banking details for the LSSA
- Signatory provides only a cell/mobile number
- E-mail address is not an LSSA e-mail address but a generic one.

Scam 2: Conveyancing year-end trust account scam

A Pietermaritzburg firm reported a new fraudulent scam this week as far as conveyancing payments are concerned.

The firm sent an e-mail to a client asking him to make payment of an amount into the firm's Bank A trust account. The next morning the client received a second e-mail advising him that, **because it was year end**, the firm required him to make payment into its Bank B trust account.

Fortunately the client was suspicious and phoned to verify whether the e-mail came from the firm and that it was correct that the bank details had changed.

The second e-mail did not emanate from the firm and the Bank B account was not the firm's trust account number.

The firm resolved that all their e-mails would, in future, carry a note to advise the client that the account details will not change under any circumstances and that e-mails will be followed by a telephone call to confirm the account details and the fact that the information will not change.

Kind regards

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