

Protect Yourself From Check Fraud

- ✓ **ACCEPT** a cashier check only for the amount of your selling price.
- ✓ **KNOW** with whom you are doing business. When possible, verify information about the buyer from an independent source such as a telephone directory or other public record.
- ✓ **CONSIDER** payment options other than cashier checks such as online payments, credit card payments or wires.
- ✓ **TAKE** a cashier check or other monetary instrument you receive as payment to a branch of the bank on which it is drawn if possible. That bank is in the best position to determine the check's authenticity.
- ✓ **TALK** to us if you are even the least bit suspicious about the authenticity of the cashier check or any item you are depositing. We can help you verify its authenticity or send it directly to the issuing bank for collection on your behalf.
- ✓ **ASK** us to explain to you the difference between when we make funds available for withdrawal from your account and when we have received final payment.
- ✓ **EXERCISE** caution when accepting other monetary instruments such as bank or postal money orders or traveler's checks – they are also often used in similar scams.
- ✓ **BE** cautious! One old adage that still remains true is, "If it seems to be good to be true, it probably is!"

Cashier Check Fraud



What you need to know.

As your financial partner, we believe it is important to pass on important information regarding a growing epidemic:

Cashier Check Fraud.

Cashier Checks - Good As Cash?

The old adage, "a cashier check is as good as cash," may, or may not, be true in today's world. A genuine cashier check is drawn on a bank and is a direct obligation of that bank. There is very little risk it will be returned. The problem is, technological advances (color printers, software programs, and special ink) have made it easier for fraudsters to create items that appear to be genuine cashier checks, but instead are counterfeit.

It is often very difficult for consumers and banks alike to determine if a cashier check is genuine or counterfeit. Fraudulent cashier checks often appear to be drawn on well known institutions and/or initiated by recognized entities or persons. We often only know the cashier check is counterfeit when it is returned to us unpaid.

Depositing A Cashier Check . . .

We are often required by federal law to make funds from items you deposit with us available to you before we actually receive settlement from the bank on which the check was drawn. Your account agreement with us states if items you deposit with us are returned unpaid, we can charge them back to your account (reverse the deposit.)

Common Cashier Check Scams

Unfortunately, fraudsters are getting more creative with their schemes. Here are examples of current cashier check fraud schemes:

Internet Sales Scams

You sell goods (often over the Internet) and the buyer sends you a cashier check for the price you agreed upon. You ship the goods to the seller only to later find out the cashier check is fraudulent.

Excess Fund Scams

You sell goods (often over the internet) and the buyer sends you a cashier check for an amount in excess of the sales price and asks you to wire all or some of the money to a third party, allegedly to a shipping agent or to satisfy another obligation.

Advance Fee & Lottery Scams

You receive a letter informing you that you have won a lottery (often a foreign lottery) or you are the beneficiary of someone's estate. The letter states you need to pay a processing or transfer fee before you can receive your winnings/inheritance, but a cashier check is enclosed to cover this cost on your behalf, all you have to do is deposit the check and wire the funds to the agent.

Mystery Shopper Scams

You receive a letter informing you that you have been selected as a mystery shopper. The letter includes a cashier check that you are instructed to deposit and use the funds to purchase merchandise at designated stores, wire a portion to a third party and keep the remainder.

Fraud Victims Should . . .

- ✓ File a report with local law enforcement.
- ✓ File a complaint with the Iowa Attorney General. (1-888-777-4590)
- ✓ Work with your bank on repayment options if the reversal of the deposit has overdrawn your account.