

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

RISA VETRI FERMAN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

KEVIN R. STEELE
FIRST ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

OSCAR P. VANCE, JR.
CHIEF COUNTY DETECTIVE

STEVEN J. LATZER
CHIEF OF STAFF

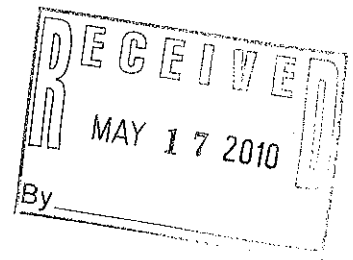
COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY
COURTHOUSE
P.O. BOX 311
NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
19404-0311

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE (610) 278-3090
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S FAX (610) 278-3095
COUNTY DETECTIVE BUREAU (610) 278-3368

May 12, 2010

Nancy R. Paul
Executive Director
Montgomery Bar Association
100 West Airy Street
P.O. Box 268
Norristown, PA 19404

Dear Ms. Paul



We recently learned about a new counterfeit check scheme targeting U.S. law firms. The scam operates as follow:

Scammers send e-mails to lawyers, claiming to be overseas and seeking legal representation to collect delinquent payments from third parties in the U.S. The law firm receives a retainer agreement, invoices reflecting the amount owed, and a check payable to the law firm. The checks are often for extremely large amounts of money. The firm is instructed to extract the retainer fee, including any other fees associated with the transaction, and wire the remaining funds to banks in Korea, China, Ireland, or Canada. By the time the check is determined to be counterfeit, the funds have already been wired overseas.

One of the most recent acts has been that the fraudulent client seeking legal representation is an ex-wife "on assignment" in an Asian country. "She" claims to be pursuing a collection of divorce settlement monies from her ex-husband in the U.S. The law firm agrees to represent the ex-wife, sends an e-mail to the ex-husband, and receives a "certified" check for the settlement via delivery service. The ex-wife instructs the firm to wire the funds, less the retainer fee, to an overseas

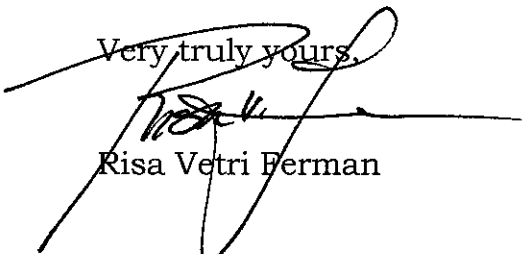
bank account. When the scam is executed successfully, the law firm wires the money before discovering the check is counterfeit.

All Internet users need to be cautious when they receive unsolicited e-mails. Law firms are advised to conduct as much due diligence as possible before engaging in transactions with parties who are handling their business solely via e-mail, particularly those parties claiming to reside overseas.

You can find additional information on the IC3 web site regarding a similar Asian extortion scheme located at the following link, <http://www.ic3.gov/media/2009/090610.aspx>. Individuals who receive information pertaining to counterfeit check schemes are encouraged to file a complaint at www.IC3.gov.

Please feel free to distribute this information to members of the Montgomery Bar Association. Anyone with questions or concerns about this issue in Montgomery County is welcome to contact the Montgomery County Detective Bureau, Major Crimes Unit at 610-278-3368.

Very truly yours,



Risa Vetri Ferman

RVF:js

cc: Steven H. Lupin, Esquire
President, Montgomery Bar Association