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WILSON PEAK
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

A quarterly newsletter providing important news and strategic information to our clients.

I hope the past few weeks have been full of family, friends, gratitude and traditions for your family.

This time of year it's especially important to protect yourself and your family against scams and fraud. Scammers are getting more sophisticated with their ability to make anyone believe they are legitmate. It's important to remain vigilant. Most people know the basics of not getting scammed, but I wanted to include some information to review so you can keep yourself and your family protected during this holiday season.

Please contact me with questions. As always, we're here to help you, your family and anyone important to you.

- Jeffrey J. Wilson, CFP®

FRAUD PREVENTION TIPS TO HELP PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Scammers are relentless when it comes to finding new ways to take advantage of people.

They may claim to be contacting you on behalf of your bank, a government agency, a shipping/delivery company, or any person or business with which you have a relationship.

Their methods and messages can be very convincing. They employ a variety of scams (auto warranty renewal, problems with a Social Security payment, debts owed to the IRS, health insurance renewal, or a relative with an "emergency") and often present a sense of urgency to attempt to gain information and/or money from their targets.

The following tips could help you avoid being scammed becoming a victim of fraud:

VERIFY THE SOURCE OF UNEXPECTED COMMUNICATIONS

Be certain that the person calling or contacting you is who they claim to be.

Scammers can make calls and texts look as if they are coming from your bank or an actual business. Even a text or email that seems to have been sent by a friend may be coming from a phone number or account that has been hacked. Emerging scams may even rely on AI technology to create voice fakes of family or business contacts.

Contact the person, bank, or business directly to confirm the legitimacy of the communication you received.

DON'T SHARE SENSITIVE OR PRIVATE INFORMATION

If you did not initiate the communication using what you know is a legitimate telephone number, email address, or website account location, **do not** give out any personal information, including your address, birth date, or Social Security or account numbers.

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Remember that some information should never be shared. This includes your financial password, PIN, and one-time access codes. Your financial institution will never ask you to share this information with anyone.

BE VIGILANT

PHONE CALLS:

- Don't answer a call from an unfamiliar number. Let it go to voicemail.
- Remember that caller ID can be spoofed or imitated, so don't rely on that technology to verify the caller.
- Be wary of phone calls with a false sense of urgency. Scammers want you to act quickly, so do the opposite. Go slow, hang up, and verify that the call is legitimate by calling that institution directly.

TEXTS AND EMAILS:

- Do not click on a link in a text or email until you are certain the sender is legitimate.
- Avoid downloading or opening unexpected files included in the message.
- Don't rely on phone numbers included in the message. Go directly to the organization's website for the correct phone number.

BE WARY WHEN ASKED TO PAY IN A SPECIFIC WAY

Scammers will often ask you to send a payment in a method that cannot be recovered. They may ask for a payment using gift cards, prepaid credit cards, wire transfers, an online payment service, or even cryptocurrency. If you're being pressured to make a payment in a very specific way, that can be a clear warning sign.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

Before taking action on a request, discuss it with a trusted friend or family member, which could help you to authenticate the legitimacy or deceit of the communication.

If you suspect or know that you have been defrauded, it may be helpful to tell a family member or friend. Victims of fraud have reported they were fearful or embarrassed to admit they had been scammed.

Report the incident to the appropriate authorities. You could be instrumental in helping shut down a fraudulent operation and protecting others from being victimized. Remember, scammers are professional criminals and anyone can be caught in a fraud scheme.

STAY AWARE OF TRENDING SCAMS

Scams and fraud are constantly evolving, so it's important to stay informed to help you avoid them.

The more you know about the types of scams and methods used, the better you can help protect yourself and your family. When you learn about scams that have been exposed, share those stories with your friends and family.

It can also be helpful to review guidelines from Wells Fargo concerning how to recognize and avoid scams at *wellsfargo.com/privacy-security/fraud/bank-scams*. Another informative source is the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) website scam alerts page at *consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts.*

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