

Wire-Transfer Verification Checklist

For law firms, title companies, and anyone sending or receiving large payments.

1. Treat any change to wiring instructions as suspicious, however routine it looks.
2. Verify by phone, using a number from an independent source, such as the original contract or the recipient's official website. Never use a number from the email requesting the payment.
3. Read back the details. Confirm the beneficiary name, bank, and account details aloud with the verified contact.
4. Require two people to approve outgoing wires above a set amount.
5. Inspect the sender's address, including the reply-to address, for look-alike domains.
6. Tell clients in writing at the start of every matter that you will never change wiring instructions by email.
7. Protect your own email. Require multi-factor authentication and check accounts for unexpected forwarding rules.
8. If funds go to the wrong account, call your bank immediately and ask it to recall the transfer, then report it to the FBI at ic3.gov. Speed matters.