



# Top Six Counterfeit Check or Money Order Schemes

Type of Scheme	Description of the Scheme
<b>Work-at-Home</b> 	You are awarded a job from an online ad. The job requires that you receive checks on behalf of the company, deposit checks into a personal bank account, and wire back the money when the funds are posted. You may keep 5 to 10 percent as your salary.
<b>Overpayment</b> 	You place goods for sale online. The perpetrator poses as a buyer, sends you a check or money order for more than the purchase price, and asks you to wire the excess money to a third party (often someone in a foreign country who allegedly handles shipping logistics). This scheme may be used for large items sales, such as automobiles, motorcycles, or boats.
<b>Sudden Riches</b> 	You receive a letter offering a chance to receive a substantial sum of money (e.g., you won a foreign lottery or are the beneficiary of an estate), but you must pay a tax or fee before receiving it. You receive a check or money order to cover the expense and are instructed to deposit the check and wire the money to a third party, usually in a foreign country.
<b>Love Losses</b> 	You fall in love with someone overseas you have been cyber-dating. Your "soulmate" sends you counterfeit checks or money orders to cover travel expenses and instructs you to deposit them into a bank account and transfer a portion of the funds to an overseas account.
<b>Foreign Business Offer</b> 	You receive an e-mail from a "foreign official" or "business-person" with a proposal: He or she wants to move a large sum of money from a foreign country and needs assistance. You are offered 25 to 40 percent of the proceeds. You receive a substantial check in the mail, which you deposit into your account. The official then wants to send you more money, but says he or she will need about \$40,000 as a bribe or to cover some sort of fees. Believing the previous check has cleared, you wire back the funds.
<b>Rental Schemes</b> 	You post an ad, online or in the newspaper, for a roommate or to sublet an apartment. The respondent supplies a check covering costs such as the first and last month's rent, utilities, and a security deposit. Shortly after you deposit the payment, you are informed that he or she will not be able to rent the property. You are asked to wire back a partial refund.

## What happens in all cases?

You deposit the check into your account and wire the money to the contact (the employer, shipper, cyber-soulmate, businessman, etc.) when the funds are posted to your bank account.

Few consumers realize that, while banks are required to post checks within a matter of days, it generally takes weeks for a check to clear.

Weeks later the bank notifies you that the check was counterfeit or stolen, and you are responsible for the full value of the deposited check.

Learn more at



<http://postalinspectors.uspis.gov>