



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

FINANCIAL CRIMES SECTION

NEW VERSION OF THE “PHANTOM HACKER” SCAM – GOLD BAR SCAMS

Phantom Hacker Scam



Tech Support Imposter

- Pretends to be technical support
- Directs you to install software on your computer to allow them remote access
- Can observe overall finances



Financial Institution Imposter

- States your computer and financial accounts have been hacked
- Directs you to move your money to a US Government entity, such as the Federal Reserve, for “safety”



US Government Imposter

- Poses as US government employee
- May provide official-looking letterhead to appear legitimate

GOLD BAR VERSION



Main Targets: Older Adult Population

- Scammers are still posing as Federal Agents but are now asking victims to turn their assets into **GOLD BARS**.
- Once the victim purchases gold bars, they are contacted and told an agent acting as a courier will meet them and pick up the gold to take it to a secure location.
- Once the handoff is made, couriers take the gold, and the victim never sees the gold again.

REMEMBER: S.T.O.P.

S: STOP – Scrutinize the correspondence and look for red flags that may indicate a scam.

T: TIME – Scammers will focus on this action being time-sensitive, so take your time to verify the legitimacy of the request.

O: OBJECT – No law enforcement agent, whether Federal, State, or Local, will contact you and tell you to convert assets for safekeeping.

P: PAUSE – Before committing to anything suspicious, contact your local law enforcement agency to verify all information.

Are you a VICTIM?

If you feel you have been victimized by this scam, contact Montgomery County Police Non-Emergency at **301-279-8000**.



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