



## Weekly Fraud update from West Mercia Police - Economic Crime Unit - 24/01/2023

### FAKE GOVERNMENT ENERGY PAYMENTS

There is currently a fake email appearing which claims to be from the UK Government and informing you that all households will receive a one-off £600 payment. The Subject line though tells you that you are eligible for “£400”. As ever with scam emails the content is full of errors.

The header will look suspicious, as does the fake email address it has originated from, which is a .plus.com address.

After the second paragraph there is a clickable link – “You can apply here” – do not click this link.

### WHATSAPP SCAMS

We have highlighted several times in the past year a WhatsApp scam where messages come from a “relative” asking to borrow money.

WhatsApp offers a free and simple way to message friends and family, but also provides a simple way from Scammers and Fraudsters to exploit this media. Users can contact anyone globally and so Fraudsters can target you from abroad with authentic looking messages.

The current round of fake messages appearing on WhatsApp include:

- Fake Job opportunities
- Wrong Number messages where the caller claims they have messaged the wrong number but then continues the contact to persuade you to sign up to a bogus cryptocurrency scheme
- False Cryptocurrency investments

As always, if it looks too good to be true, it is too good to be true.

#### **What to do if you receive an unexpected WhatsApp message**

- Treat it with caution
- Never click on links in unsolicited messages
- Report the message to WhatsApp by selecting the message – tap on the sender’s contact details, then select “Block and Report”

*Please feel free to share this information with any relatives, friends or neighbours you think may be vulnerable.*

#### **Take Five To Stop Fraud**

- **Stop:** Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.
- **Challenge:** Could it be fake? It’s okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.
- **Protect:** If you think you’ve been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

*For further information visit:*

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>