



WhatsApp Scam

Hello

This was reported on Nationally by our colleagues in the UK National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) in late July:

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/alert/action-fraud-warn-of-recent-whatsapp-scam-hitting-community-and-religious-groups>

Since, we here in TVP, have seen several being reported to Action Fraud over the past few weeks and it continues to be a national trend.

The TVP Corporate Communications Team, will be making this messaging available via the local Neighbourhood policing teams for their community contacts.

Nevertheless if you have links with Community Groups (**Note this is not linked to the current situation in the Middle East**) across the TV area do please share with them the NFIB item (As above) from July 2023 as well as the attached Social Media graphic.

The Guidance and reporting process is as summarised below (Taken from the above item).

“Large community and religious WhatsApp groups are being targeted by scammers who infiltrate these groups to deceive their members into sending them money. The fraud often begins when a member of the group receives a WhatsApp audio call from the fraudster, pretending, or claiming, to be a member of the group. This is done in order to gain the individual’s trust, and often the scammer will use a false profile picture and / or display name, so at first glance it would appear to be a genuine member of the group.

The fraudster will then call the victim and say they are sending a one-time passcode which will allow them to join an upcoming video call for group members. The scammer then asks the victim to share this passcode with them so they can be “registered” for the video call. What’s really happening is that the scammer is asking for a registration code to register the victim’s WhatsApp account to a new device where they then “port” their WhatsApp profile over.

Once the fraudster has access to the victim’s WhatsApp account, they will enable two-step verification which makes it impossible for the victim to access their account. The scammer will then message other members of the group, or friends and family in the victim’s contacts, asking them to transfer money urgently as they are in desperate need of help”

Oliver Shaw, Detective Chief Superintendent and Head of Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) said:

“WhatsApp continues to be a popular platform for community and religious groups, but sadly also for fraudsters. Here, the scammers rely on the goodwill of group members and their intrinsic desire to help others in distress.

“We urge people always to be wary when receiving contact via WhatsApp or other messaging platforms. This is particularly the case when being asked to provide account information – despite the fact that you may recognise the individual’s profile picture and / or name.

“Never share your account information with anyone, and if you think it’s a fraudulent approach, report the message and block the sender within WhatsApp. To make your account more secure, we advise setting up two-step verification to provide an extra layer of protection. This makes it increasingly more difficult for fraudsters to gain access to somebody else’s WhatsApp account”.

What can you do to avoid being a victim?

- **Never** share your account’s two-factor authentication (2FA) code (that’s the six digit code you receive via SMS).
- **Set up two-step verification** to give an extra layer of protection to your account.

Tap Settings > Account > Two-step verification > Enable.

· **THINK. CALL.** If a family member or friend makes an unusual request on WhatsApp, always call the person to confirm their identity.

· You can **report spam messages or block a sender within WhatsApp**. Press and hold on the message bubble, select ‘Report’ and then follow the instructions.

If you have been a victim of fraud or cybercrime, report it at <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/> or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, victims of fraud and cybercrime should report to Police Scotland on 101”

Nb: Please do not report incidents of Fraud and or Cyber Crime direct to this email account

Thank you, regards

Mark Godsland Cyber Security Advisor

Cyber Protect

CISMP | CC certified

Thames Valley Police & South East ROCU



Message Sent By

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