



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

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For Immediate Release: July 11, 2012

News Release 2012-20

ATTORNEY GENERAL WARNS PUBLIC OF E-MAIL SCAM

HONOLULU – The Department of the Attorney General is investigating an ongoing e-mail scam in which the sender falsely claims to represent the State of Hawaii Unclaimed Property Branch (UPB). The email claims to be written by Department of Budget & Finance (B&F) Director Kalbert Young, and solicits personal financial information.

The State of Hawaii does not send e-mail solicitations regarding unclaimed property. If you receive such an e-mail, it is fraudulent, and should not be trusted. DO NOT respond or provide any personal information in response to the fraudulent solicitations.

In this particular e-mail scam, the sender claims to be an employee of the UPB. The message informs the recipient that he or she is an heir to the estate and property of a deceased relative. The e-mail instructs the recipient to either fax or e-mail personal information so that the process to record ownership of the property can begin. In a number of instances, the e-mails list Director Young as the writer. The scam is sophisticated in that it also provides a form that has the State of Hawaii seal, but does not match any form that is currently used or offered by the UPB.

The majority of inquiries provided to B&F come from mainland and not local residents. However, since the method of solicitation is via e-mail and referencing a Hawaii-based program, we cannot be certain that Hawaii residents have not been solicited. Also, since the method of solicitation is via e-mail, we also cannot be certain where the perpetrators are based.

“Someone who is claiming to be me is scamming a number of individuals,” said B&F Director Young. “We want the public to know about this scam to prevent anyone from being taken advantage of by this clearly illegal activity.”

“A person engaging in this conduct has committed a felony,” added Attorney General David Louie. “Anyone committing this crime will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and may be charged with offenses such as identity theft, computer fraud, and any and all other applicable criminal violations.”

People who have been solicited as part of this scam can assist the developing investigation by providing copies of any and all direct communications they have received. This includes e-mail, faxes, and records of telephone conversations. Members of the public who think they may be a victim of this scam, may contact the Department of Budget & Finance – Unclaimed Property Branch directly at (808) 586-1589.

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