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## NAMPA POLICE DEPARTMENT

# PRESS RELEASE

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The Nampa Police Department would like to warn people about another fraud scam being perpetrated in our area. This is a variation of the common “Nigerian” fraud scams.

Recently, Nampa Police have been investigating a case where tens of thousands of dollars have been fraudulently obtained by foreign sources through a scheme convincing the victim that he is the recipient of 15.5 million dollars of inheritance. To receive this money he is convinced to wire transfer funds to a foreign source for processing fees, tax fees, account fees, legal fees, document fees, and various other fabricated “expenses”. He is convinced that this is a now deceased long lost relative and no other benefactor has been located.

People frequently get hooked by these types of scams because they want to believe that the source is legitimate without taking steps to verify the source. Some clues to these fraudulent scams are: 1. the language in the documents being sent to the victim have common grammatical errors, 2. vague sources that cannot be verified easily, and 3. the suspects use foreign untraceable names or business identities. Example 1, some institutional names are legitimate, but the website given to send information is not actually associated with that institution. Example 2, the contact names might also be the name of an actual employee with the banking or financial institution, but the contact numbers and email given do not go to that individual. These are usually clues that need to be researched to be verified. Suspects rely on the fact that many victims will not do the research, or that they will overlook a few discrepancies in hope of the big payoff.

People need to take the time to verify the source by contacting an attorney or the police before proceeding with sending money. Disturbingly, victims will continue to believe these deceptions even when confronted by police who try to convince them of the scam. During these scams perpetrators often ask for personal identifying information in order to “send you your money, winnings, inheritance,” or whatever other payoff you are expecting. **DO NOT** give out personal bank account information, social security numbers, name and birth date, drivers license, or passport information to a source you only know by email, telephone, or the internet.

In this particular case, the victim also convinced others (fellow church members) to assist in this fraud by having them wire money for him. Due to limitations on the amount of money that can be transferred, he told fellow church goers and friends that they could assist by filling out western union money transfers for a few hundred or few thousand dollars and sending the money for him. The police have collected 4 filled file folders with over 100 transfers of money in the range of hundreds or thousands of dollars each (the total has not been calculated but is easily in the tens of thousands).

The police have no recourse in recovering these funds other than educating the public and preventing further participation in these crimes. People who fall victim to these schemes **must** understand that the financial loss is permanent. Due to the remote international location and non-existent jurisdictional power, the money will never be recovered. If you are ever asked to transfer, mail, ship or otherwise send money, gift cards, other merchandise to someone you do not know, you should be suspicious. If it is a friend or acquaintance asking, you should also be concerned whether they might be getting duped. Once the money is sent it is likely gone for good!

The police have reached out to family in this case asking for them to intervene on behalf of the victim to help protect any remaining assets.

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