



WIRE FRAUD AND ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER ADVISORY (C.A.R. Form WFA, Revised 12/17)

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_ ("Property").

WIRE FRAUD AND ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFERS ADVISORY:

The ability to communicate and conduct business electronically is a convenience and reality in nearly all parts of our lives. At the same time, it has provided hackers and scammers new opportunities for their criminal activity. Many businesses have been victimized and the real estate business is no exception.

While wiring or electronically transferring funds is a welcome convenience, we all need to exercise extreme caution. Emails attempting to induce fraudulent wire transfers have been received and have appeared to be legitimate. Reports indicate that some hackers have been able to intercept emailed transfer instructions, obtain account information and, by altering some of the data, redirect the funds to a different account. It also appears that some hackers were able to provide false phone numbers for verifying the wiring or funds transfer instructions. In those cases, the victim called the number provided to confirm the instructions, and then unwittingly authorized a transfer to somewhere or someone other than the intended recipient.

ACCORDINGLY, YOU ARE ADVISED:

- 1. Obtain phone numbers and account numbers only from Escrow Officers, Property Managers, or Landlords at the beginning of the transaction.
2. DO NOT EVER WIRE OR ELECTRONICALLY TRANSFER FUNDS PRIOR TO CALLING TO CONFIRM THE TRANSFER INSTRUCTIONS. ONLY USE A PHONE NUMBER YOU WERE PROVIDED PREVIOUSLY. Do not use any different phone number or account number included in any emailed transfer instructions.
3. Orally confirm the transfer instruction is legitimate and confirm the bank routing number, account numbers and other codes before taking steps to transfer the funds.
4. Avoid sending personal information in emails or texts. Provide such information in person or over the telephone directly to the Escrow Officer, Property Manager, or Landlord.
5. Take steps to secure the system you are using with your email account. These steps include creating strong passwords, using secure WiFi, and not using free services.

If you believe you have received questionable or suspicious wire or funds transfer instructions, immediately notify your bank, and the other party, and the Escrow Office, Landlord, or Property Manager. The sources below, as well as others, can also provide information:

Federal Bureau of Investigation: https://www.fbi.gov/; the FBI's IC3 at www.ic3.gov; or 310-477-6565

National White Collar Crime Center: http://www.nw3c.org/

On Guard Online: https://www.onguardonline.gov/

NOTE: There are existing alternatives to electronic and wired fund transfers such as cashier's checks. By signing below, the undersigned acknowledge that each has read, understands and has received a copy of this Wire Fraud and Electronic Funds Transfer Advisory.

Buyer/Tenant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
Buyer/Tenant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
Seller/Landlord \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
Seller/Landlord \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

©2016-2017, California Association of REALTORS®, Inc. United States copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code) forbids the unauthorized distribution, display and reproduction of this form, or any portion thereof, by photocopy machine or any other means, including facsimile or computerized formats.

THIS FORM HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. NO REPRESENTATION IS MADE AS TO THE LEGAL VALIDITY OR ACCURACY OF ANY PROVISION IN ANY SPECIFIC TRANSACTION. A REAL ESTATE BROKER IS THE PERSON QUALIFIED TO ADVISE ON REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS. IF YOU DESIRE LEGAL OR TAX ADVICE, CONSULT AN APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL.

This form is made available to real estate professionals through an agreement with or purchase from the California Association of REALTORS®. It is not intended to identify the user as a REALTOR®. REALTOR® is a registered collective membership mark which may be used only by members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® who subscribe to its Code of Ethics.

Published and Distributed by: REAL ESTATE BUSINESS SERVICES, LLC. a subsidiary of the California Association of REALTORS® 525 South Virgil Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90020

