



FINANCIAL SCAM TARGETING SERVICE MEMBERS

Service members are facing severe financial losses after responding to social media posts or messages stating “Get out of Debt” or “Make Extra Money”. There are two primary methods used to establish contact with potential victims. In one version, the service member responds to a social media post and in another the service member receives a friend request from a person who presumably shares many friends in common. After establishing contact, the service member receives a message from the scammer offering grant money as a “Thank You” for their service or offering to pay money for “debt relief”.

In both methods, the service member is asked to provide account information such as login and password. The victim may also be asked for the answers to security questions established through their online bank account. Victims report that money is then directly deposited in their accounts by the scammer initially for the purposes of paying off their debt. The victim is then asked to send a portion of the money via wire or cash to a third party. Victims later discover that loans have been opened in their name with the same financial institution. Any attempts to further contact the scammer are unsuccessful.

Victims of this scam will likely be responsible for the amount of financial loss when their account information is willingly provided to a third party. Service members are reminded to never provide account login details to anyone and safeguard login details and personally identifiable information.



GUIDANCE

If anyone has fallen victim to the aforementioned scam or any social media posts of a similar nature, or has provided personal account information to any third party:

- Immediately contact the local NCIS office and follow their guidance.
- Notify your bank or financial institution and attempt to have your accounts locked.
- Change all account passwords and seek additional security steps by your financial institution.
- Notify your respective command, and local law enforcement authorities, in addition to NCIS.
- Consider a credit lock through one or all three of the major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, Transunion).