

[Alert for charities – fraudsters impersonating staff](#)

We have received several reports from charities who have been targeted by fraudsters impersonating members of staff, specifically attempting to change employees bank details. In all these cases the request was made through an email.

What to look out for

Requests to your HR department, finance department or staff with authority to update employees bank details, usually from a spoofed or similar email address to that of the subject being impersonated.

With a strong social engineering element, the fraudster often states that they have changed their bank details or opened a new bank account.

Protection and prevention advice

- review internal procedures regarding how employee details are amended and approved, especially those in relation to verifying validity
- if an email is unexpected or unusual do not click on the links or open the attachments

Email addresses can be spoofed to appear as though an email is from someone you know. Check email addresses and telephone numbers when changes are requested. If in doubt request clarification from an alternatively sourced email address or phone number.

Sensitive information you post publicly, or dispose of incorrectly, can be used by fraudsters to perpetrate fraud against you. The more information they have about your charity and employees, the more convincingly they can appear to be one of your legitimate employees. Always shred confidential documents before throwing them away.

We issued an alert in May 2019 that provides information and advice to charity trustees about cyber crime and how to report it.

Read [Alert for charities – cyber crime and how to report to the Charity Commission](#)

Reporting fraud

If your charity has fallen victim to this type of fraud, or any other type of fraud, you should [report it to Action Fraud](#).

Charities affected by fraud should also [report it to us as a serious incident](#).

Serious incident reporting helps us to assess the volume and impact of incidents within charities, and to understand the risks facing the sector as a whole. Where appropriate, the Charity Commission can also provide timely advice and guidance.

Notes

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, is issuing this alert to charities as regulatory advice under section 15(2) of the Charities Act 2011.