



August 24, 2022

Purchase Order Fraud Advisory

Several Alameda County vendors have reported that someone has been impersonating Alameda County. A scammer posing as a County employee has presented to vendors fake documents, including a request for quotes and purchase orders. These documents appear to be official Alameda County purchase orders and bid solicitations, but they are not.

There are multiple variations of this scam. Purchase order fraud occurs when a scammer contacts a vendor and impersonates a legitimate organization. While posing as the organization's representative, the scammer requests a quote and orders large quantities of a product, such as laptops or cellphones. The shipment will then be directed or diverted to their location, where they attempt to take possession of the goods. Another common variation of this scheme is when the vendor ships the product to the fake company and bills the legitimate institution, in this case, the County. Unfortunately, it is too late by the time the fraud is discovered, and the vendor must absorb the cost of the lost purchase.

To assist vendors in identifying procurement scams, we have compiled the following list:

- The email sender does not use an official @acgov.org email address or uses a spoofed mailing address.
- Email correspondence has poor grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.
- The caller or sender claims to be an employee no longer associated with the County.
- Descriptions are sparse and demand all items without the logo of the organization.
- Phone numbers in the email are not associated with the County.
- The payment method has changed without prior notification. For example, the requestor suddenly switches from physical checks to electronic payments.
- The shipping address on the purchase order is not a county address or property associated with the County.
- A change in shipping address from a County address to a PO Box or storefront. The County will never use a PO Box or storefront for a shipping address.
- It is recommended to cross-reference previously noted information on past orders or solicitations to check for suspicious discrepancies.

If you have a question or concern regarding the legitimacy of an Alameda County purchase order or solicitation, please contact GSA-Procurement at 510-208-9600.

The official Alameda County website is <http://www.acgov.org>.

Best Regards,

DocuSigned by:

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John Glann

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