

West Virginia Executive Branch Privacy Tip of the Week

Snail Mail Scams!

Nobody Writes Anymore

If you're like me, you often long for a good "old fashioned" letter and are pleasantly surprised when one shows up in your mailbox! But keep your guard up, as phishing artists are counting on people like us to hungrily gobble up their hand-written correspondence.

One such scam arrives via postal mail with your address scrolled in pen by an actual human being, making it intriguing enough to open. (Tellingly, however, there is no return address.) Inside, you'll find what will seem to be a recognizable corporate logo, such as US Airlines, at the top of the letter in an effort to mimic a similarly-named official company letterhead. The letter, which may be typed, will claim you have won two round trip tickets and need to call the enclosed number to claim them.

If you are duped into calling, the person on the other end of the line will ask for information they should not need, such as your social security number or a credit card. Do not give this information away!

What to do if you receive a scam letter

There are two things you can do to help catch the criminals behind these carefully crafted letters:

- 1) If the letter carries the logo of a legitimate company, forward it to the actual company. Many organizations have an email address on their website with contact information for reporting potential scams and other types of privacy problems; and
- 2) Submit your story to the FBI using [this form](#), as well as to the FTC [following these directions](#).

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<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs157/1102633925835/archive/1111410913746.html>

Note: Your agency/bureau/department/division may have specific requirements – always check your policies and procedures. If you have questions, contact your Privacy Officer.