

Alerts

Warning: Emails regarding a supposed online lottery win from someone claiming to be 'Josephine Hayes'

22 November 2021

Emails have been sent misusing the name of Josephine Hayes, in respect of a supposed 'United States Online Lottery'.

What is the scam?

A member of the public in Germany has reported receiving emails from someone claiming to be “Josephine Hayes”, in respect of a purported win on a ‘United States Online Lottery’.

The SRA has been advised that the recipient was told that a large amount of money from a lottery win was being held for him in a bank in London, with a lawyer supposedly commissioned to contact him and help with the matter. We understand he was then informed that a €3,200 advance payment would be required.

An email seen by the SRA, although written in German, informed the recipient of two ways to supposedly make a payment. We understand that a purported banking document titled ‘Funds Transfer Slip And Authorization’ was also provided with the emails.

Is there a genuine firm or person?

The SRA regulates a solicitor called Josephine Hayes, who is currently not practising. The genuine Josephine Hayes is not believed to have any genuine connection with the emails referred to in the above alert

What should I do?

When a firm's or individual's identity has been copied exactly (or cloned), due diligence is necessary. If you receive correspondence claiming to be from the above firm(s) or individual(s), or information of a similar nature to that described, you should conduct your own due diligence by checking the authenticity of the correspondence by contacting the law firm directly by reliable and established means. You can contact the SRA to find out if individuals or firms are regulated and authorised by the SRA and verify an individual's or firm's practising details. Other verification methods, such as checking public records (e.g. telephone directories and company records) may be required in other circumstances.