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## Information Security Update : Watch Out for Tutoring Scams

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## [UMS:IT Information Security Advisory] Information Security Update: Watch Out for Tutoring Scams

1 message

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**UMS Information Security Advisory** <ums-iso-advisory@maine.edu>

Tue, Apr 30, 2024 at 11:07 AM

Reply-To: UMS-ISO-Advisory+owners@maine.edu

To: UMS Information Security Advisory <ums-iso-advisory@maine.edu>

Dear University of Maine System Community,

We hope this message finds you well. As part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding our shared digital environment, the Information Security Office is providing you with this monthly security update. This communication highlights the frequently reported: **Tutoring Scams**.

**Description:** This periodic phishing scam typically targets science and math faculty members. This scam involves fraudulent requests for tutoring services, which ultimately lead to financial loss for the victim.

The threat actor, posing typically as a parent of a University or high school student, contacts a faculty member requesting tutoring services for their child. We've seen these requests that seem quite legitimate get forwarded from the faculty member to their students who may be looking for tutoring work.

After agreeing on the tutoring arrangements, the scammer sends a check to the tutor with an amount significantly higher than what was agreed upon. The scammer requests the excess funds be returned *before* their check has fully cleared.

**Impact:** The tutor may generously send "extra" funds back to the scammer before realizing the original check is worthless.

**Affected Systems:** University Gmail account

### Recommended Actions

*For Everyone:* Be aware that scammers initiate fraudulent tutor requests in order to engage victims in what ultimately is a variety of an "overpayment" scams.

*For Faculty/Staff:* Be aware that scammers may attempt to leverage the reputation of faculty by asking for tutoring services that the faculty member is likely to pass on to their students.

*For Students:* Be aware that tutoring scams exist and always vet the requestor through an independent source. Be suspicious of "overpayments" as a red flag for fraud. Always wait for a check to fully clear with your bank before providing any services in return.

### Conclusion:

Tutoring scams are one of several common tactics used by scammers to target University students. If

you believe you have been targeted by a tutoring scam or have fallen victim to it and need assistance, please contact the University's Information Office and your local law enforcement agency.

Remember, if an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Stay Safe,

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