



Church of Ireland – Parish Handbook

Guidance to Parish Treasurers on Invoice Redirection Fraud

The RCB would like to remind Parish Treasurers that there has been an increase in the level of financial fraud during the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular invoice redirection fraud is on the increase and occurs when a business or charity receives a fake email which is crafted to look like it is coming from someone you know in the supplier or contractors firm, advising of new bank account details for payment. The intention is to redirect payments to this fraudulent bank account. Funds which are redirected, are within a very short timeframe passed through numerous local and international bank accounts. The fraud will usually be discovered some time afterwards when the legitimate supplier queries the "non-payment" of an invoice.

The fraudster usually pressurise you into acting quickly and without thinking. Typically, the fraudster instructs you to make an urgent high value payment to a supplier or creditor, and usually includes the payee details, including the IBAN.

We would ask all Parish Treasures to be extremely vigilant when verifying supplier payment and any requests to modify existing supplier bank account details or indeed where a change is made to a new suppliers details.

Where a supplier notifies you of a change to their bank details we would ask that the following actions be taken in order to protect against invoice redirection fraud.

- Make a phone call to a known contact within the supplier company to confirm any change of bank details is legitimate. Please do not use email to make contact with the supplier when confirming changes in bank account details.
- Always confirm the change of bank details with the company/supplier making the changes, being mindful not to use the contact details on the letter or email requesting the change as these contact details may direct you to the fraudsters.
- Look out for different contact numbers and email addresses for the company as these may differ from those recorded on previous correspondence.
- Do not allow yourself to be pressurised into making a payment as typically the fraudster will advise that the payment is urgent and in many cases that they need to be somewhere very important urgently and therefore need to get this particular payment sorted quickly.
- If you discover that a payment is directed to a fraudulent bank account you should immediately advise the Chair and Secretary of the Select Vestry and report the fraud to your local PSNI/Garda station.
- Consider any fraud insurance cover your Parish may have in place which may be able to be called upon in the event that you are defrauded.

Further information on how to detect and prevent this type of fraud is available on the following websites.

<https://www.bankofireland.com/security-zone/>

<https://www.fraudsmart.ie/personal/>

You should also check out your Parish bank website for relevant safeguards in preventing fraud.