



Dear Stewart Partners,

As this is our last update before Christmas, we want to wish all of you safe and happy holidays. Stewart offices will be closed on Monday, December 25th in observance of the Christmas holiday and Monday, January 1st in observance of the New Year.

In this week's update, we are providing information about a recent phishing campaign and again remind you that fraudsters are ready to take advantage of any opportunity to steal your information. Given that we are sometimes in a rush during the holiday season, fraudsters will try to exploit this to their advantage. Please stay vigilant in order to prevent being the victim of a scam. In addition, we are also providing information about trust account training offered by the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers. Lastly, but not least, we've included a reminder about the benefits of issuing a Homeowner's Policy.



Stay Safe While Shopping Online

As we know, scammers have become more sophisticated in their tactics, moving from simple, misleading messages to more advanced methods. Genady Vishnevetsky, Stewart's Chief Information Security Officer, recently brought to our attention a parcel delivery scam to be aware of during the busy shipping season. In this particular scam, the attack is initiated by sending a phishing email or text message that states, "USPS package arrived at the warehouse but could not be delivered due to incomplete address information." The scammer sends this message from a spoofed website, such as walmarts.com instead of Walmart.com. If you click the link to the spoofed website, it will bring you to a malicious website where the scammer could capture your name, address, credit card, and/or banking information.

Here are some tips to help you avoid becoming a victim of this scam:

- If you receive an email or text message stating your delivery is delayed and you are expecting a package, go back to the original e-commerce site to check the status of your shipment and verify the shipping carrier.
- Use authentic USPS, FedEx, UPS, or DHL websites to track the status of your deliveries.
- Take the time to review and verify before clicking on any links that appear urgent.
- If you are not expecting a shipment, delete the email or text.



Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers Offers Trust Account Training

For those who aren't aware, the Massachusetts Office of Bar Counsel regularly offers a free one-hour training class on trust account recordkeeping. The class provides a review of how to maintain your IOLTA account, how to complete the mandatory three-way reconciliation, how to document the withdrawal of an earned fee from a trust account and what transactions are prohibited. For more information on upcoming class dates and materials or to watch a rebroadcast of the class, please visit the IOLTA Resources Page on the BBO website here: <https://www.massbbo.org/s/iolta-resources>.



Stewart Homeowner's Policy

If you are not issuing the Homeowner's Policy yet, you may want to know what it offers beyond the standard owner's policy and who can be an insured thereunder.

First, the Homeowner's policy can be issued when the property is a completed 1 to 4 family residence. It cannot be issued if the property is an investment property, commercial property, or a vacant lot. Also, even if the property is a 1 to 4 residence, if any construction has not been completed the Homeowner's policy cannot be issued. The policy does, however, include residential condominium units.

Prior versions of the Homeowner's policy excluded coverage if the owner was an entity. However, the new (2021) policy form expanded coverage to entities, if the entity purchasing the property was formed for the purposes of estate planning.

An important benefit of the Homeowner's Policy is post-policy forgery coverage. The policy includes as one of its covered risks, loss or damage resulting from forgery or impersonation which occurs after the date of the policy. This important covered risk provides title insurance protection in the instances where there is a forged deed or mortgage, occurring after the initial purchase. This type of fraud is sometimes called "title theft."

The Homeowner's policy also expands the "continuation of coverage" for post-policy transfers by the insured owner to certain categories of transferees such as the insured's estate planning trust – even if consideration was given. It also expands coverage to an ex-spouse and adds the transfer on death coverage.

If you have questions about the Homeowner's Policy, contact your Stewart underwriter.



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