

Crime Advisory – Scams Involving Takeover Of Whatsapp Accounts

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The Singapore Police have received reports regarding WhatsApp accounts being taken over by scammers. Victims would first receive a WhatsApp message from one of their contacts, whose WhatsApp account might have been compromised, requesting for WhatsApp account verification codes that they have received via SMS to be sent to him/her. The victims would subsequently lose access to their WhatsApp account once the WhatsApp verification codes are sent to the scammers.

In a variant of the scam reported overseas, the scammers used the compromised accounts to deceive the account holders' contacts into purchasing gift cards and sending over the password for the cards. The scammers then sold the gift cards online.

Members of the public are advised to adopt the following crime prevention measures:

- a. Beware of unusual requests received over WhatsApp, even if they were sent by your WhatsApp contacts;
- b. Always call your friend personally to verify the authenticity of the request if in doubt;
- c. Protect your WhatsApp account by enabling the 'Two-step Verification' feature, which is available under 'account' in the 'settings' tab of your WhatsApp application. This would prevent others from compromising your WhatsApp account.

Anyone with more information on such scams can call the Police hotline at **1800-255-0000**, or dial **'999'** for urgent Police assistance in Singapore.

To seek scam-related advice, members of the public may call the Singapore National Crime Prevention Council's anti-scam helpline at 1800-722-6688 or visit www.scamalert.sg.