



For Licensee Awareness

February 4, 2021

Social Engineering Attacks Against MRA Licensees

The Marijuana Regulatory Agency is informing marijuana businesses about incidents of fraud or attempted fraud.

Common themes of the fraud or attempted fraud are as follows:

- Licensees were contacted about an upcoming MRA inspection but this contact was not done by MRA staff. The contacting individual requested photos of the alarm system, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, marijuana product, tracking numbers, and exit doors. The contacting individual impersonated an owner and/or manager of the marijuana business and contacted an assistant manager or other employee for these photos.
- An individual impersonated an owner of the marijuana business and requested the employee to provide money to another person associated with the owner. The business had a loss of over 100,000 dollars as a result of this fraudulent scam.

In each call or text, the suspect disclosed business owners' names or managers' names and relayed pertinent information about the business, thus gaining the trust of the employees.

A recent fraud attempt included the impersonation of an MRA Regulation Officer. Aside from requesting a business card and or/ enforcement credentials, verifying an MRA Regulation Agent or Regulation Officer status or inspection is possible by contacting MRA-Enforcement@michigan.gov.

To remain vigilant to ongoing fraudulent activity, marijuana licensees and applicants for marijuana licenses are encouraged to ensure their staff verify the validity of the call or text with a manager or owner *before taking action*.

Rule 15 of The Marijuana Licenses Rule Set (R 420.15) and Rule 4 of the Marijuana Disciplinary Proceedings Rule Set (R 420.804)

Also, marijuana applicants and licensees are reminded that MRA administrative rules require licensees to notify the agency and local law enforcement authorities within 24 hours of becoming aware of – or within 24 hours of when they should have been aware of – the theft or loss of marijuana product, or criminal activity at the marijuana business.

All suspicious activity should be reported to MRA-Enforcement@michigan.gov and local law enforcement. Questions can be sent to the Marijuana Regulatory Agency Field Operations Section via email at MRA-Enforcement@michigan.gov.

This Tips bulletin does not constitute legal advice and is subject to change. Licensees are encouraged to seek legal counsel to ensure their operations comply with all applicable laws and rules.