

## What's Fraud?

Fraud is behaviour that's deceptive, dishonest, corrupt or unethical.

For a fraud to exist there needs to be an offender, a victim and an absence of control or safeguards.

Here in Queensland, the laws on fraud involve dishonesty in any of these situations:

- obtaining property belonging to someone else
- applying someone else's property to one's own use
- causing a detriment to another person or entity
- gaining a benefit or advantage for any person; and
- inducing or causing any person to deliver property to another person

Fraudulent activity in the workplace often results in the loss of revenue and property, while increasing operational costs and service charges. It can also mean obligations to employees, customers, suppliers or contractors can't be met.

The knock-on effect for businesses may:

- damage credibility
- compromise confidentiality
- result in public criticism

Common frauds include using false

- identities
- cheques
- credit and EFTPOS cards

## Fraud Risks and Prevention Measures

With the rapid advancements in technology, frauds are becoming more sophisticated, widespread and complex. As a result, stamping out fraudulent practices becomes a huge challenge and requires extra vigilance on the part of businesses and individuals.

# Cheques

## Risks

As we move towards a cashless society and rely more on credit cards and EFTPOS, cheques are gradually diminishing.

However, cheque fraud still poses a serious risk to the business community and individuals alike. It can result in loss of funds from accounts or loss of goods.

Frauds involving cheques include:

- presenting lost, stolen or counterfeit cheques
- fraudulently cashing cheques
- "bounced" cheques because of insufficient funds in the account
- inadequate cheque clearance procedures
- using unauthorised business cheques

Using cheques out of sequence or ordering a new chequebook before using the previous one can also result in fraudulent activity.

## What can you do?

Keep track of your cheques by using them in sequence from the beginning of the book and keeping your chequebook in a safe place.

Other steps you can take include ensuring:

- blank cheques are not pre-signed
- cheques are made payable to a particular business or individual. Never write cheques to cash or bearer.
- transaction details are recorded on the relevant cheque stub
- there are sufficient funds in your account to meet the cheque on presentation

Keep cheques you receive safe and bank them promptly. You can also make a request to the bank for special clearance.

Avoid cheque fraud by making sure:

- cheques payable to a third party are properly endorsed by the payee
- cheque endorsement is in order
- there are no alterations to the cheque
- the cheque has the correct date
- figures match the writing
- signature is okay
- the company issuing the cheque confirms it's validity



**For further information please contact:**

Major Fraud Investigation Group  
Queensland Police Service  
200 Roma Street, Brisbane, Qld 4000

Phone: (07) 3364 6622  
Facsimile: (07) 3364 6549  
Website: <http://www.police.qld.gov.au/pr/program/fraud/whatis.shtml>  
Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000  
Crime Stoppers TTY 1800 333 000  
Emergency only 000

Cartoons by Rob Wann

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**Queensland Police Service  
Vision Statement**

We are determined to be a professional police service, dedicated to excellence and committed to working in partnership with the people of Queensland to enhance the safety and security of our community.



Your guide to stopping

# Cheque fraud

*'Foiling the fraudsters'*