



司法警察局
POLÍCIA JUDICIÁRIA

Community Policing

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Police Circular
02/09/2026

Account theft tactics have escalated again Never click the "START" button of unknown WhatsApp accounts

The Judiciary Police (PJ) has recently received reports from a number of residents, claiming that fraudsters have been using WhatsApp business accounts to send scam messages to users in the attempt to steal their account login credentials. The scam messages falsely claimed that users had "frequently logged in from different IP networks" or "been flagged as high-risk accounts", and asked users to click the "START" button in the message to "verify their accounts", even stressing that accounts would be automatically logged out if not verified within the deadline.



After users clicked the button, the screen would redirect to a website impersonating the "WhatsApp Security Centre", which provided a string of 8-digit codes and asked residents to enter the code into the WhatsApp application on their own phones. Those residents who entered the code as requested would have their accounts immediately logged in by scammers elsewhere. Having thus obtained residents' WhatsApp login credentials, the swindlers would use them to defraud residents' relatives and friends or for other unlawful purposes.

This time, fraudsters exploited the button function of WhatsApp business accounts to make their messages look authentic, concealing the phishing links commonly used in similar scams in the past. Residents may fall victim to the scam and lose their accounts if they are slightly careless..

The Anti-Fraud Coordination Centre of the Judiciary Police reminds the public:

1. WhatsApp will never use excuses such as "risks" or "accounts will be logged out" as an excuse to ask users to click unknown buttons or links.
2. Only accounts bearing the "blue tick" are genuine official WhatsApp accounts.



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3. Never yield to anyone's request to use your own WhatsApp to scan unknown QR codes or enter verification codes, so as to prevent your account from being taken over by others.
4. If relatives or friends request money through any messaging app, verify their identity and the money request through other channels immediately
5. If in doubt, residents may use PJ's Anti-Fraud App to check the risk score and report clues of suspected fraud, or call the anti-fraud enquiry hotline at 8800 7777 or the crime report hotline at 993 for assistance.