

Bank Requests: What to Request and Why

Wording for Bank Requests

The suggested wording to request bank information is:

All the following information for any and all accounts held individually and jointly by [Name(s), SSN, DOB] for the period [Month DD, YYYY] until [Month DD, YYYY/present]:

- Images of account application(s), including a signed application form.
- Images of authorized signature card(s).
- Images of any documents affecting the ownership of the account.
- Names of all who have access to the account(s).
- Copies of all photo identifications, a Social Security card or other forms of identification of authorized user(s).
- Images of monthly statements.
- Images of checks (fronts and backs) of checks written from or deposited into the account.
- Images of deposit and withdrawal slips.
- Any documentation related to wire transfers to or from the account.
- Documentation regarding any cash advances from the account.
- Any correspondence for the account(s).
- Any audio recordings, or other documentation, of telephone communications with anyone discussing the account.
- Any power-of-attorney documents affecting ownership and/or authorization to conduct transactions on any of the said accounts and any instrument canceling or otherwise amending the power-of-attorney.

Including the victim's address in the request could limit the results to only those accounts sent directly to the victim and omit the victim's account(s) sent elsewhere, such as statements sent to a family member or to the power-of-attorney agent.

The time period of the request should begin 6 months to a year before the alleged financial abuse began. These earlier statements will help to understand the victim's normal and customary expenses and payment methods. These normal and customary expenses and payment methods can be used as a benchmark when looking at the statements during the time when the alleged abuse is supposed to have occurred.

Importance of Requested Information

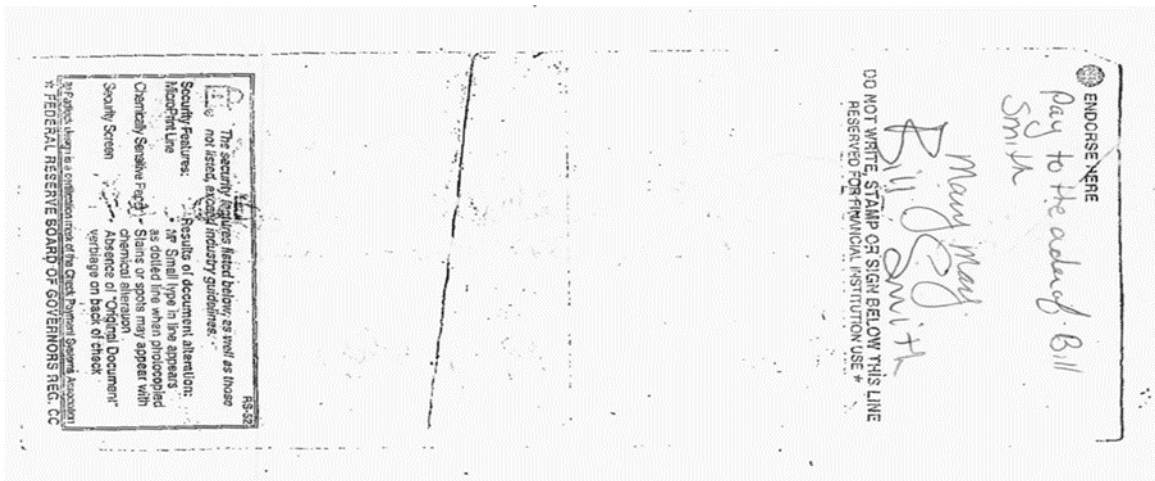
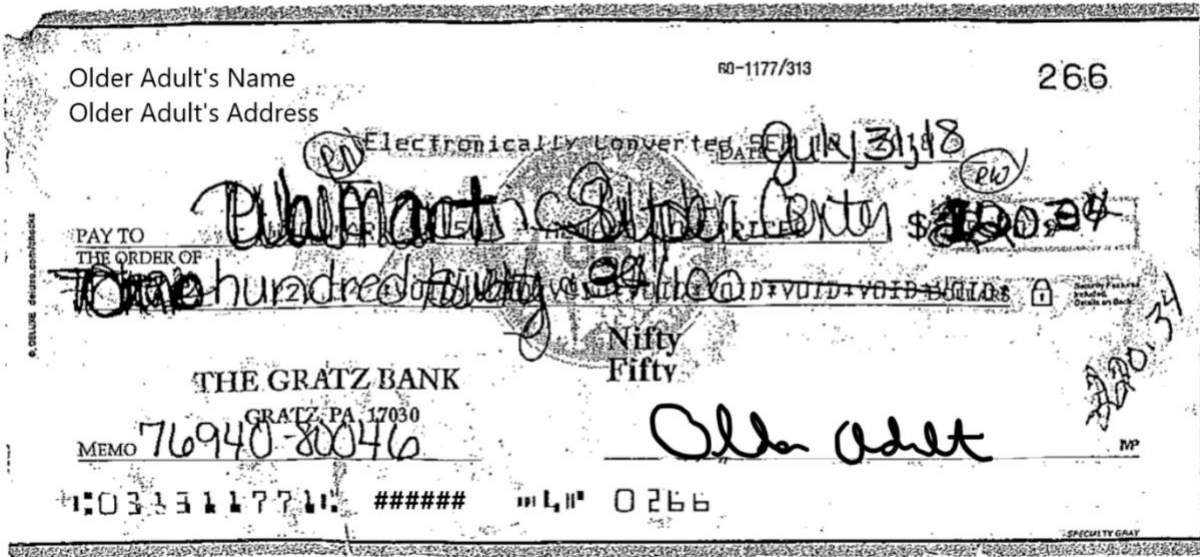
In addition to showing the additions and uses of funds, **statements** can reveal:

- missing or diverted revenue (assuming you know to look for it)
- scams
- the victim acting – knowingly or unknowingly – as a money mule

Case Example 1

In April 2019, an older adult opened a new bank account. Over the next few months, \$37,115 was deposited into the account. The deposit information provided by the bank indicated that the deposits were made at a bank branch in Pennsylvania, and were composed of checks payable to the older adult from individuals outside of Pennsylvania and proceeds from an insurance policy that the older adult had cashed out. During this same time period, \$34,792 (including fees) was withdrawn from the account at ATM machines in Florida and Jamaica. The indicators that the older adult was working as a money mule – knowingly or unknowingly - include: receiving checks of various amounts from individuals, and the withdrawals occurring by ATM machines located outside of Pennsylvania, especially on days when the older adult made deposits in person at a bank branch located in Pennsylvania.

But statements only provide part of the picture. Copies of the **checks** can show evidence of alteration (e.g., changing the amount or payee). Look closely in the example below. “Walmart Super Center” is written over the original payee, and the letter “P” in the original payee’s name can be seen in the “W” of Walmart.



If only the front of the checks were requested from the bank, this example of a restricted endorsement where the payee wrote the check over to a second person would be missed during the investigation.

There isn't anything necessarily wrong with writing a check over to someone, but it could be a red flag. In this case, Mary May, the caregiver, and Bill Smith, the power-of-attorney agent, worked together to steal money from the victim. The power-of-attorney agent wrote the check payable to caregiver, and the caregiver endorsed the check over to the agent. Without seeing the endorsement, the check appeared to be a normal expenditure to the caregiver.

Let's take a moment and review the other information on the request list.

Withdrawal items can include withdrawal slips given to a bank teller to obtain cash from the account or cashier checks that were generated from withdrawals from the accounts. Frequency of the withdrawals should be examined as well as the amounts, any notations on the slip indicating the purpose of the withdrawal, signatures, and to whom the cashier check was made payable.

[Case Example #1](#)

An area agency on aging recently had a case where the power-of-attorney agent went to the bank on six occasions to obtain cashier checks to pay for the older adult's care. Each time, the power-of-attorney agent withdrew \$1,000 more from the older adult's savings account than was needed to pay for the care. The power-of-attorney agent received the difference in cash. This theft was identified because the withdrawal items provided by the bank included the cashier's check payable to the facility where the older adult was living, an internal bank document to record the bank fee charged for processing a request for the cashier's check, and another internal bank document showing "cash out" of \$1,000 in cash. Cash out is a banking term for when the bank gives cash to a customer. Criminal charges for theft have been filed against the power-of-attorney.

Deposits and deposit items can include deposit slips, copies of checks deposited into the account, and internal bank documents indicating "cash in", which is a bank term for the bank receiving cash.

Deposit items can also include internal bank documents that show that the deposit made into the bank account was a *split deposit*. Split deposits are when the customer presenting an endorsed check for deposit receives part of the amount being deposited in cash. The deposit items in a typical split deposit include: a deposit slip, a copy of the check being deposited, and an internal bank document showing "cash out". With split deposits, the deposit amount in the bank statements is the actual amount deposited into the account. It is not the original amount of the check. For this reason, split deposits cannot be identified from the bank statements alone.

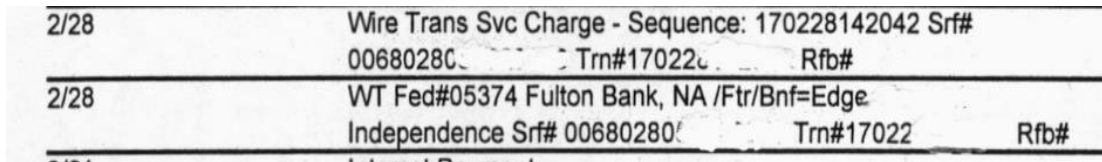
[Case Example #2](#)

The power-of-attorney agent from the above case was responsible for depositing, into the older adult's accounts, checks from an investment company. On eight occasions, the

power-of-attorney agent made split deposits by depositing a portion of the total check amount and receiving the difference in cash. The total amount of cash obtained was \$14,740.

Wire transfer requests can provide the name or routing number of the bank that generated the payment and the bank that received the payment, the name of the person or corporation making and receiving the payment, and sometimes transaction reference numbers.

Here is an example of a wire transfer and related service charge recorded in a victim's bank statements. WT is wire transfer. The receiving bank is Fulton Bank NA. "Ftr" is the transaction type, funds transfer. "Bnf" is the beneficiary, which is Edge Independence. "Srf" is the sender's reference number. "Trn" is the transaction reference number, and "Rfb" is the related reference number.



2/28	Wire Trans Svc Charge - Sequence: 170228142042 Srf#		
	00680280	Trn#17022	Rfb#
2/28	WT Fed#05374 Fulton Bank, NA /Ftr/Bnf=Edge		
	Independence Srf# 00680280	Trn#17022	Rfb#

The **customer profile** may identify new loans or lines of credit, increases in the limits of existing loans, the issuance of new ATM or debit cards, and the closure of accounts. If accounts were closed, confirm that the entire amount was deposited into another of the victim's account or used for their benefit.

The **power of attorney documents** will tell provide details on the victim's power of attorney agent and what powers they have. Pay particular attention to any gifting allowed by the document. Does the signature on the power of attorney documents look like the victim's? If the victim appears to lack decision-making ability, was the victim legally capable of signing the document when it was signed?

Signature cards say who is authorized to write checks and withdraw money from the account. If there is a recent addition to the signature cards, things to consider include:

- Is the victim aware of the addition?
- What is the reason the victim gave for adding the person?
- Did the victim add the person under duress?

Applications for loans or credit cards should be reviewed for necessity. Additionally, examine the victim's signature and depending upon the victim's cognitive function, if the

victim knew what they were signing. Reviewing the credit card statements to verify that the purchases are benefiting the victim will be helpful. Some perpetrators will purchase personal items with the victim's credit card and then use the victim's funds to pay the credit card.

Cash advances and offsets (Offsets means how the money was used) can identify if someone took a cash advance against a loan or credit card. Question the necessity for them, if the victim was aware of the cash advance, and if the cash advance benefitted the victim.

Correspondence and customer contact notes can provide information such as problems that have occurred in the account, any authorizations given, etc.