

# Lake County Sheriff's Office

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**John D. Idleburg**  
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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Sheriff's Office Seeing Uptick in 'Romance Scam'**

The Lake County Sheriff's Office warns the public of an ongoing cryptocurrency romance scam.

Sheriff's detectives have seen an increase in romance-based scams which originate on dating applications, social media applications, and other communication applications.

These scams work by the scammer befriending victims, generally on a dating application or other social media application. The scammer will then ruse and "romance" the victim into believing they are in a legitimate relationship, through regular ongoing communication with the victim.

After the victim is lured into believing they are in a relationship and they can trust the other person, the scammer then convinces the victim to purchase popular cryptocurrencies from legitimate cryptocurrency exchanges, such as Coinbase or Binance. The victim generally does not suspect anything is wrong at this point, as they are able to see the cryptocurrency in their account.

The scammer then entices the victim to believe they can make more of a profit by trading those legitimately bought cryptocurrency to a different cryptocurrency exchange. These secondary exchanges are often fraudulent and have websites that appear to be a legitimate cryptocurrency exchange. The scammer will then tell the victim to send their cryptocurrency to this other exchange and will give them details on where to send it, which often includes a cryptocurrency "wallet." Once the victim sends their crypto to these unknown cryptocurrency wallets, it is extremely difficult to track its whereabouts or for law-enforcement to develop a suspect.

If you are unsure of the legitimacy of a cryptocurrency exchange, you should conduct research and look for reviews. If you are unable to find any data about the exchange, it is likely fraudulent. As always, everyone should be extremely cautious of those you meet online.

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