



TNEJC WEEKLY UPDATE

Intelligence, prevention & action for Tennessee's elder justice network

STATEWIDE PARTNERS | PROFESSIONAL EDITION

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

PAGE 1 OF 2

THIS WEEK'S ACTION

Do not invest because an online contact shows you profits. Verify the person, platform and withdrawal process independently before money moves.

THE WEEK IN ELDER JUSTICE

A PROFIT SCREEN CAN BE PART OF THE TRAP.

A fresh federal case shows how online trust, fake platforms and blocked withdrawals can turn a relationship into financial ruin.

NATIONAL ALERT | FEDERAL CRIMINAL COMPLAINT | ALLEGATIONS NOT PROVEN | DOJ, SEPT. 25 **ALLEGED \$53 MILLION CRYPTO PIPELINE TRACED TO ONLINE INVESTMENT FRAUD**

What happened: Federal prosecutors charged Trung Nguyen Van with money laundering. A complaint alleges one person sent about \$16 million to a supposed platform called "Triangle," while Van's wallets received about \$53.3 million tied to wire-fraud schemes targeting U.S. residents. Charges are accusations; guilt must be proven in court.

How the harm works: An unsolicited message or dating-app contact builds trust; a fake adviser or investment site displays impressive early gains; pressure grows to send more; withdrawals are blocked.

Tennessee takeaway: A polished dashboard proves only what a website displays—not that the investment, balance or person is real.

What to do: Pause. Find the firm and contact information yourself. Ask a trusted person or financial professional to review the claim, and test whether funds can be withdrawn before sending anything else.

[DOJ Missouri charging release](#) | [FinCEN digital-asset scam analysis](#)

TENNESSEE UPDATE | CHARGED — ALLEGATIONS NOT PROVEN | MPD, SEPT. 18

A "PRANK" DOES NOT EXCUSE RESTRAINT OR HUMILIATION

What happened: Murfreesboro police arrested a former restaurant manager after alleging that a neurodivergent worker was tied to a workstation. Police said APS and the Special Victims Unit were involved. The charges remain allegations.

Tennessee takeaway: "Trend" or "joke" language never replaces consent, dignity or safety.

What to do: Document what was seen, preserve video or messages, and report suspected abuse to APS or police.

[Murfreesboro Police case release](#)

FIELD LESSON FROM VIRGINIA | SENTENCED | DOJ, SEPT. 25

HANDING OVER A PHONE CAN OPEN THE DOOR TO AN ACCOUNT

What happened: Eleven defendants were sentenced in a credit-union parking-lot scheme. Court records described deceit or intimidation used to obtain phones, then access accounts, apply for loans, dispute charges and move money.

Tennessee takeaway: Physical control of an unlocked phone can become financial control within minutes.

What to do: Never hand an unlocked phone to a stranger. If control is lost, call the institution and carrier from another device immediately.

[DOJ Virginia sentencing release](#)



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PAGE 2 OF 2

VERIFICATION, RESPONSE & PARTNER PRACTICE

TRUST THE CHECK—NOT THE CLAIM.

INVESTMENT FRAUD WATCH | CONVICTED | DOJ, SEPT. 25 BRAND-NAME CLAIMS AND PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTS CAN BE FABRICATED

What happened: A California jury convicted a “smart rings” executive in a near-\$2 million Ponzi scheme. Evidence showed false patent ownership, retailer and investor claims, and professional-looking documents; reported victim losses were about \$1.4 million.

Tennessee takeaway: Logos, tax returns, valuations and familiar company names should be confirmed at the source.

What to do: Verify registrations, patents and claimed partners using independent records and contact details—not material supplied by the promoter.
[DOJ California conviction release](#)

CHECK BEFORE YOU ACT



CheckBeforeYouActTN.org

Free, private decision support

ENFORCEMENT WATCH | INDICTED — ALLEGATIONS NOT PROVEN

Stolen mail keys and checks

A New York indictment alleges stolen USPS collection-box keys were used to steal mail and deposit checks. Use an inside post-office slot or secure pickup for outgoing checks; monitor accounts and report missing mail promptly.

[DOJ mail-theft indictment](#)

DIGITAL SAFETY WATCH | PUBLIC SOCIAL-MEDIA POSTS

The globe icon means anyone can see it

Scammers scan public comments for grief, loneliness, prizes, complaints and requests for help. Do not post account details or answer money requests in public threads. Verify the person through a separate, known channel.

PAUSE BEFORE REPLYING TO A PUBLIC POST

IF MONEY OR INFORMATION WAS ALREADY SENT

ACT QUICKLY. KEEP THE EVIDENCE.

- 1 Contact the bank, card issuer, wire service, payment app, crypto exchange or gift-card company immediately; ask for fraud assistance.
- 2 Preserve messages, screenshots, receipts, usernames, phone numbers and account details.
- 3 Suspected exploitation of a vulnerable adult: Tennessee APS, 1-888-277-8366 (24/7).
- 4 Internet-enabled fraud: IC3.gov. Consumer fraud: ReportFraud.ftc.gov.
- 5 Immediate danger, threats or coercion: call 911 or local law enforcement.
- 6 Tell one trusted person today. Reporting quickly can help limit harm and protect others.

STOP. VERIFY. REPORT.

[Tennessee APS](#) [IC3](#)

STOP. VERIFY. REPORT.