



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY ON MOBILE MONEY PLATFORMS

Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA) wishes to warn ICT consumers using digital financial platforms to be cautious and not fall prey to scammers involved in fraudulent activities such as running fake promotions and those masquerading as employees of mobile money service providers requesting for their PINs through mobile phones and requesting them to enter some short codes.

Other criminal activities being engaged by these scammers include sending fake employment advertisements requesting consumers to pay for the jobs before they are recruited, sending out fraudulent bulk SMS messages, fake SIM swaps and PIN reset/change to defraud unsuspecting consumers.

All this has taken place in the last two weeks, where over 96 consumers have been cheated out of a total amount of K138,095.00 during a period when most consumers are using digital platforms for financial transactions due to the COVID - 19 outbreak which has resulted in a public health directive for members of the public to stay at home.

In order to ensure a safe and secure Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector in Zambia, the Authority has since directed Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to intensify consumer awareness activities related to digital financial services following the increase in the number of consumer complaints with regard to these fraudulent activities which are currently prevailing.

The Authority while recognising efforts by Mobile Network Operators in ensuring consumers are provided with financial services on the digital platforms on their

respective networks during this period, has decided, in order to address the prevalence of digital financial crime, directed them to undertake the following;

1. Dissemination of bulk SMS Messages in the 7 major languages to;
 - i. Warn consumers of potential criminal activities.
 - ii. Advise consumers not to share their PIN over the phone.
 - iii. Advise consumers to verify any promotion with the respective MNO.
 - iv. Advise consumers on whether the MNO would call consumers to verify personal information over the phone (voice/sms).

2. Radio and Newspaper adverts in the 7 major languages promoting DFS and advising consumers of the Do's and Don'ts.

The above directives are scheduled must be implemented within 7 business days and to run on a weekly basis for a period of 60 days.

This development is expected to amplify consumer awareness and education activities related to Digital Financial Services with the view of equipping consumers with more information on how best to protect themselves from scammers.

The Authority remains steadfast in ensuring a safe and secure ICT sector in Zambia and are committed to supporting Governments initiatives of introducing measures and policies to mitigate against risks associated with cyberspace.

Further, the Authority is collaborating with Law Enforcement Agencies to investigate and have the scammers prosecuted.

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