

In This Issue:

- **Congratulations to Matt Fendon Law Group**
- **Happy Holidays!**
- **How to send money with Zelle® safely**
- **Setting Up a Work-From-Home Policy**
Steps you can take to ensure a successful WFH policy for your business
- **SMisShing and Gift Card Fraud**

Congratulations to Matt Fendon Law Group

At a recent State Bar of Arizona mixer, Matt Fendon Law Group won the Meadows Bank raffle for a \$75 gift card and a wonderful bucket of Halloween goodies.

We look forward to more events like this with the members of the State Bar of Arizona.

Pictured: Matt Fendon and Amy Harvath, Vice President, Branch Relationship Manager

Setting Up a Work-From-Home Policy

Steps you can take to ensure a successful WFH policy for your business

Remote work has seen an exponential rise in popularity among employees in part due to the pandemic. With office spaces shuttered for months, work moved out of cubicles and communal spaces and into the home. And with major companies adopting work-from-home policies, this trend is not likely to change any time soon.

If you run your own business, offering work-from-home opportunities is a great way to get a competitive edge with talent hungry for flexibility and better work-life balance. But to offer that privilege and still succeed, you need to take the proper steps to ensure that you've set up a sustainable WFH policy that works for all involved.

Start with the nuts and bolts

When you're exploring creating a work-from-home policy, you need to consider the extent to which the policy will work. Rhiân Davies, a contributor at Motley Fool's The Blueprint, suggests starting by figuring out who will be eligible to work remotely. She recommends not leveraging it as a tool to reward longer-tenured employees; instead, you should create a pathway for newer employees to take advantage of the policy.



You can do this by creating a guideline to earn WFH privileges. This might include being employed for a set number of months and/or demonstrating effectiveness at hitting target goals.

Another consideration is frequency. You have to decide if you want to commit to offering employees the ability to work entirely from home or if you prefer a hybrid model — where an employee spends a certain number of days in-office and days out. This will also require determining if you want employees to have set days or allow them to create their schedule.

Successful WFH policies also need infrastructure. Davies notes that you will need to make sure that employees have the right technology and equipment to perform their duties or that you can provide that equipment for them. It's also critical to establish shared channels for communication — and messaging apps like Slack and video conferencing services like Zoom play a pivotal role in unifying employees across different locations.

Set clear expectations for your team

Jeff Haden, a contributing editor for Inc., says that you should manage remote employees by three standards: availability, communication, and results. These attributes, he suggests, determine the effectiveness and success of a work-from-home policy.

If your business maintains strict operating hours, you'll want to establish ground rules about availability even with employees who work flexible hours. You should have clearly stated requirements for the time it takes to respond to emails, messages, and calls. Davies also notes that you need to be reasonable — don't expect employees to respond to customer inquiries late at night, but be appreciative if they take the initiative to do so.

For those times where an employee won't be available, communication is key. WFH employees should understand the importance of sharing their schedules with peers, customers, and leadership so that all bases are always covered.

Above all else, Haden says that deliverables are the true measure of an employee's value. If an employee gets work done and drives results, they are delivering what you ask of them no matter how unconventional their hours may seem.

Successful WFH comes down to trust and leadership

The concept at the core of a work-from-home policy, Haden notes, is trust. Before you even consider implementing WFH as a permanent fixture of your business, you have to be confident that you can trust your employees to do their jobs. That's as much an introspective hurdle as it is external.

For a work-from-home policy to function, you will need to be comfortable leading in unique situations. Barbara Z. Larson, Susan R. Vroman, and Erin E. Makarius — writing for Harvard Business Review — recommend providing structure with daily check-ins. Whether it's a quick email, a message on Slack, or an old-fashioned phone call, take the time to let your employees know that you are there to support them even if you're not sharing a space.

You also have to trust yourself not to let one bad apple spoil the bunch, proverbially speaking. If an employee is not meeting your expectations or failing to deliver, you need to recognize that it's more likely an issue with one individual and not an indictment of work-from-home as a concept.

Establishing a work-from-home policy is a great way to stand out with prospective talent and keep your current employees satisfied. By building a policy that works for your business and ensures its success, you could put yourself in a better position to grow and succeed for years to come.

Happy Holidays!

Wishing all our friends and their loved ones a safe and joyous holiday season.

We look forward to the future with hope, gratitude and continued success for all those we are blessed to work with throughout the year.

Meadows Bank • 702-471-2004 • <https://www.meadowsbank.bank/>

SMiShing and Gift Card Fraud

At this time of year, SMiShing (SMS Phishing) and gift card fraud seem to go hand in hand. By shedding some light on these two criminal acts, you will be better able to spot the fraud and protect yourself.

SMiShing can take a number of different forms, ranging from dating to winning a prize, or an urgent need from your 'boss'. In this article, we are focusing on a prevalent fraud that is gaining even more traction during this shopping season; SMiShing to gain gift card balances. Here's how it works.

You receive an "urgent" text from your boss, perhaps the CEO of the company asking you for some help. After you reply, you will get the next text message that will make it appear that your boss is busy, in a meeting, or perhaps on a conference call and cannot get away. You are then requested to go to the nearest store to purchase gift cards for an important client and text a photo of the numbers off the back of the card. Once you do that, your 'Boss' has left the conversation and the phone number is disconnected.

This scenario plays out all too often and can take the form of a family member, friend, or charitable organization rather than an employer/employee relationship. If the request was legitimate, technology exists that would allow the 'Boss' to purchase the gift card electronically without having to physically go to the store. Fraudsters move fast and adapt various scenarios to reach their goal. So how can you protect yourself?

Ask yourself would this person really text me about this? Have they ever texted or called you before? Would they really want me to purchase gift cards for them? Why wouldn't they buy them online themselves?

Staying informed about this prevalent scam will help you safeguard your personal information and your hard-earned money. Here are some ways to protect yourself from SMiShing.

- Do not assume the text is authentic just because it looks professional.
- Never give out personal information via text message.
- If the fraudster is claiming to be a friend, family member or close acquaintance, call that person directly using a trusted phone number
- If they claim to represent a charity, visit the organization's website directly.
- Contact the company using a trusted telephone number. For bank or financial institutions use the number on the back of the debit or credit card.
- Block the number.
- Avoid responding to a phone number that you don't recognize.
- Keep in mind that most government agencies, such as tax or law enforcement agencies, won't contact you via text message.

If you have been a victim of cyber financial fraud, we encourage you to file a complaint at the FBI's Internet Crimes Complaint Center [ic3.gov](https://www.ic3.gov) and inform your financial institution right away.

As always, Meadows Bank is here for you to assist account holders who may have fallen victim to cyber attack.

How to send money with Zelle® safely

Zelle® is a fast, safe and easy way to send and receive money with people you trust, like your babysitter, your fellow PTA mom, your son's soccer coach, or your coworker. Whether you just enrolled with Zelle® or have been an active user for a while, there are a few tips you should always keep in mind to ensure you are being safe when sending money.

Only send money to people you know and trust

Money moves fast with Zelle®, directly from the sender's bank account to the recipients bank account within minutes*. So, it's important you know and trust the people you're sending money to.

Why? Because you can't cancel a payment once it's been sent, if the recipient is already enrolled with Zelle®. And if you send money to someone you don't know for a product or service you might not receive (like paying for something in advance), you may not get your money back. Keep in mind that sending money with Zelle® is similar to handing someone cash

Beware of payment scams

One example of a payment scam is buying event tickets at a price that seems too good to be true from a stranger and never receiving them. If the seller asks you to use Zelle® to purchase the tickets, you should refuse unless the seller is a person you personally know. Also, keep in mind that no one from Meadows Bank will ask you to send them money with Zelle® as a test or to send money to avoid a fraud event.

Neither Meadows Bank nor Zelle® offers a protection program for authorized payments made with Zelle®. So, if you aren't sure you will get what you paid for, you should use another payment method with purchase protection, such as a credit card

Treat Zelle® like cash

Did your friend change phone numbers recently? It's easy for people to change their phone number or email address. When in doubt, contact your friend to verify the email or U.S. mobile number they used to enroll with Zelle® before you hit "Send." Another good check point for ensuring you're paying the right person is to confirm the first name that is displayed for enrolled emails and U.S. mobile numbers.

If a person has already enrolled a U.S. mobile number or email address with Zelle®, you can't cancel the transaction, so it's important you get it right the first time.

If you'd like more information on safely using peer-to-peer payments, check out these articles from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).

- Helpful Tips for Using Mobile Payments Services and Avoiding Risky Mistakes
- Tips on Using Peer-to-Peer Payment Systems and Apps
- How to Keep Your Personal Information Secure Online

*U.S. checking or savings account required to use Zelle®. Transactions between enrolled users typically occur in minutes.

Zelle and the Zelle related marks are wholly owned by Early Warning Services, LLC and are used herein under license.

© 2021 Early Warning Services, LLC. All rights reserved. Zelle and the Zelle marks are property of Early Warning Services, LLC.

