

Home Warranty Scam Letters

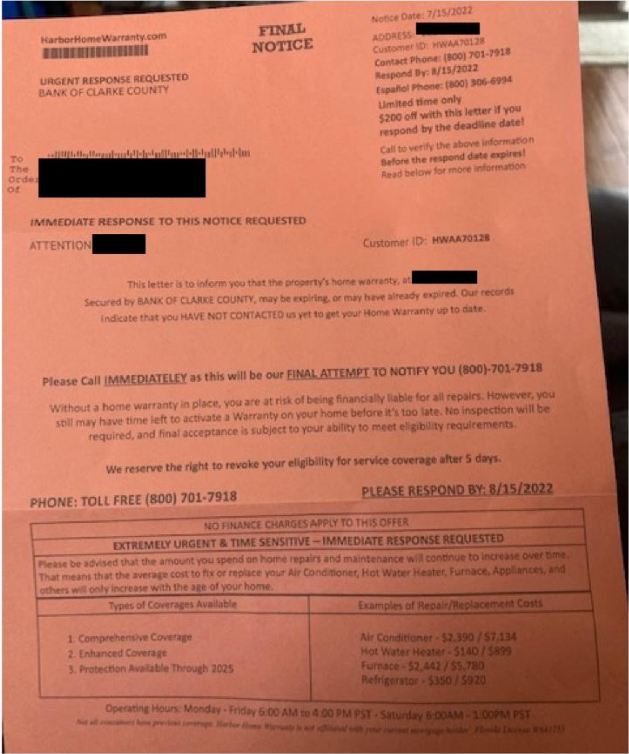
Bank of Clarke County customers have been reporting that they have received letters in the mail urgently requesting homeowners to purchase a home warranty, claiming that the current home warranty “may be expiring or may have already expired.” After reviewing several of these letters, we can confirm that these did not come from the Bank and are in fact a scam. We advise discarding the notices when you receive them.

What are the claims?

These letters may come from a variety of companies, such as Harbor Home Warranty or Home Warranty Direct, as well as other companies engaged in the same type of business. These letters typically will refer to the homeowner’s mortgage company, in our case they reference Bank of Clarke County.

The letter asks the homeowner to respond to the notice immediately to avoid loss of warranty coverage. Some of the letters state that the notification is a “final attempt” and state that the letter is “extremely urgent and time sensitive.” Solicitations like these that use threatening language or unnecessary urgency are almost always going to turn out to be a scam.

This scam is convincing because, not only is it sent through mail, but it includes the name of the homeowner as well as the homeowner’s mortgage lender. A sample letter of what they may look like is below.



Where did the scammer get my information?

Some information about mortgages is public record and can be found in deed books at the city or county courthouse and some information can be found online. This is how the scammer is able to obtain your name, property address, and mortgage lender. You can tell that the letter is likely a scam since the customer ID or account number does not match the one that you have been assigned by your lender. Additionally, these letters also typically will have a disclaimer at the bottom that states that the company is not affiliated with the homeowner's mortgage lender. They use fine print for the disclaimer in an attempt to appear transparent, however they ensure they make multiple references to the mortgage lender in order to make the letter appear legitimate.

What happens if I call the number?

It's hard to say exactly what will happen as it depends on the type of scam they are attempting to perpetrate. You may receive a real person or you may end up working with an automated system. They may request personal information that they can use for other fraudulent purposes, or at the very least they may convince you to pay for the home warranty before they disappear with your money. In either case, **do not give out your personal information or pay for a service unless you know you are working with a reputable company.**

What should I do with the letter?

Throw it away, just as you would any other piece of junk mail you receive. Bank of Clarke recommends shredding any mail you receive that contains personal information just in case someone may find it and attempt to use it. You can always contact us directly if you are in doubt about any communication you receive that references Bank of Clarke. We will never send you advertisements for any product that contain threatening or time-sensitive language.

What if I want to purchase a home warranty?

Not all home warranties are scams, and if you are interested in purchasing one, please make sure you go with a legitimate company. We encourage you to research different companies and check with the Better Business Bureau or Consumer Affairs to make sure you choose a reputable company. As for these letters, ignore them and throw them away.