

Hanover County  
Internal Audit Department  
Check Fraud Guidelines

Reducing check fraud starts with knowing what to look for when you receive a check. These tips will help reduce the chance of accepting bad checks and the expenses that go with them. Employees, refer any questions to your supervisor.

1. Is the customer name and address pre-printed on the check?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It should be</li> <li>• If it isn't, check writer should hand write name and address on front of check</li> </ul>
2. Is the correct address on the check?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address should match photo id and bill</li> <li>• If not, request a second form of identification and have check writer put correct address on check</li> </ul>
3. Is the check number low?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low numbers suggest account is new</li> <li>• Checks written on new accounts are much more likely to bounce</li> <li>• High number is no guarantee, as some banks allow new accounts to start with any number</li> </ul>
4. Does the bank name and address (full, or city and state) appear on the check?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If not, there's a good chance the check is forged</li> <li>• <b>Do not accept</b> a check without the bank's address pre-printed</li> </ul>
5. Does the bank's identification number appear on the check?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every financial institution has a unique identification number</li> <li>• If the bank number is not on the check, consider the check suspect and <b>do not accept</b> it</li> </ul>
6. Does the check writer's account number appear on the check?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If not, the check writer may not have an account</li> <li>• Some checks generated by computers do not show an account number</li> <li>• <b>Do not accept</b> a check without an account number</li> </ul>
7. Is the check written in ink?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checks should be filled out and signed in ink</li> <li>• <b>Do not accept</b> a check written in pencil</li> </ul>
8. Is the check dated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the check has a current date</li> <li>• If you receive a check with no date, date it</li> <li>• Do not deposit a check that has not been dated</li> </ul>
9. Is the check postdated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not illegal to write a postdated check, but</li> <li>• If you accept it, it is considered an extension of credit</li> </ul>
10. Is the check backdated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most banks will not honor a check unless it is fairly current</li> <li>• Checks that are six months or older should be refused</li> <li>• Have the check writer give you another check with a current date</li> </ul>
11. Does the county name appear on the payee line?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the payee line is filled out correctly</li> </ul>
12. Does the amount written in numbers match the amount written in words?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is a difference, <b>refuse the check</b></li> </ul>
13. Is the check signed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not a crime to give someone an unsigned check, but</li> <li>• Unsigned checks are worthless</li> <li>• Make sure the check is signed</li> </ul>
14. Does the signature match the name on the check?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the signature does not match the name on the check, the person may not be authorized on the account</li> <li>• If the signature does not match, <b>do not accept</b> the check</li> </ul>
15. Is the signature illegible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare the signature on the check to the signature on the person's photo identification</li> <li>• If the signatures do not match, <b>do not accept</b> the check</li> <li>• Always ask for a photo identification</li> </ul>
16. Has the check been altered or defaced?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do not accept</b> a check that has been altered or defaced</li> <li>• When accepting cash, be alert to discoloration or alterations on bills, which means the currency could be stolen or counterfeit</li> </ul>