

## How the Cashier's Check Vehicle Scam Works

### 1. They "Agree" to Buy Quickly

The scammer:

- Offers full asking price (sometimes more).
- Doesn't negotiate.
- Often says they're out of state, overseas, or "on deployment."
- Wants to send a **cashier's check** and arrange pickup.

This is meant to make the deal feel easy and low-friction.

### 2. They Send a Fake Cashier's Check

They mail you what looks like a legitimate cashier's check from a real bank.

It may:

- Look extremely convincing.
- Have real bank names and routing numbers.
- Even pass a quick visual inspection.

But it's fake or altered.

### 3. You Deposit the Check

Here's the key trick:

When you deposit a check, your bank may make the funds "**available**" in **1–2 business days**.

Note: **Available does NOT mean cleared.**

Banks are legally required to make funds available promptly, but it can take days or even weeks for a check to clear through the banking system.

### 4. They Pressure You to Release the Vehicle

Once you see the money in your account, they say:

- "Great! My shipper will pick it up."
- Or "There was a mistake — I sent too much. Please send the extra to the transport company."
- Or "Send back the difference via wire/Zelle/CashApp."

You release the vehicle or send them money.

### 5. The Check Bounces

Days (sometimes weeks) later:

- Your bank discovers the check is fake.
- The funds are reversed.
- You are responsible for the full amount.

Now:

- The vehicle is gone.
- Or you've wired them real money.
- And the bank won't reimburse you.

## Why This Works

It exploits a misunderstanding:

- Funds available ≠ check cleared
- Cashier's check ≠ guaranteed real
- Banks can reverse fraudulent deposits

Even though cashier's checks are "guaranteed" when legitimate, fake ones are common.

### **Variations of the Scam**

- They “accidentally” overpay and ask you to forward money.
- They use a fake shipping company.
- They insist on quick pickup before full verification.
- They send a real check from a stolen account (which later gets reported).

### **How to Protect Yourself When Selling a Vehicle**

If you’re selling privately:

- ✓ Meet in person at the buyer’s bank.
- ✓ Accept **cash only**, verified at the bank.
- ✓ Or complete the transaction at your bank with confirmed wire transfer.
- ✓ Never release the vehicle based on a deposited check.
- ✓ Never send “overpayment” funds back.
- ✓ Avoid buyers who refuse to meet.

### **Red Flags**

- Buyer is out of state but eager.
- No test drive.
- Willing to pay full price immediately.
- Poor grammar or scripted messages.
- “My mover will pick it up.”