

ONLINE SCAMS (PART ONE)

The Royal Government has observed the momentum of transnational crime—which exists in Cambodia as a complex, networked phenomenon, causes significant negative impacts on the country.

In response to the issue of technology-based fraud, the Royal Government has issued: (A) Instruction No. 01 NA on the Campaign to Eradicate Technology-Based Fraud, dated 14 July 2025; (B) Sub-decree No. 03 ANKr.BK on the Management of Security and Safety in Concentrated Residential Locations, dated 05 January 2026; (C) Inter-Ministerial Prakas No. 161 MEF.PRK.ATC on the Procedures and Modalities for Imposing Fines on Owners or Managers of Concentrated Residential Locations, dated 25 February 2026; and (D) On 06 April 2026, the Royal Government of Cambodia issued Royal Kram No. NS/RKM/0426/006, promulgating **the Law on Combating Technology-Based Fraud**. This law aims to establish criminal provisions for combating fraud committed via technological systems, with the objective of safeguarding security, public order, and the effectiveness of measures to combat technology-based fraud. This law will be the primary topic discussed in this Part One monthly legal brief.

The Law on Combating Technology-Based Fraud applies to fraud committed via technology systems or through the use of such systems to perpetrate offenses. Furthermore, this law has extraterritorial reach—extending beyond the borders of the Kingdom of Cambodia—if: 1) the perpetrator is a Cambodian national; 2) the victim is a Cambodian national; 3) the assets or proceeds of the offense are transferred into or out of the Kingdom of Cambodia; or 4) the transaction involves the banking or financial system of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Accordingly, we will provide an analysis of the Law on Combating Technology-Based Fraud, focusing on key aspects including: **1) Definitions**; **2) Offense**; and **3) Competent Authorities**, as detailed below:

1. DEFINITIONS

According to the Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Cambodia 2009, fraud is defined as follows:

"Is the act of deceiving a natural or legal person by the use of a false name or a fictitious capacity, by the abuse of a genuine capacity, or by means of unlawful manoeuvres, in order to obtain from that person, to his or her prejudice or to the prejudice or to the prejudice of a third party:

- 1. the transfer of funds, valuables or any property;*
- 2. the provision of a service, or;*
- 3. the making of a document incurring or discharging an obligation."¹*

In simpler terms, it refers to any act where a fraudster use tricks, forgery, or deception to induce trust in a victim, ultimately resulting in the loss of money, property, data, or other benefits for the victim or a third party.

As for **technology-based fraud** ("**Online Scams**"), this represents an evolution from direct, face-to-face scams to the use of electronic devices—such as telephones, computers, or other hardware—to

WHAT'S NEW

On 25 February 2026 the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Ministry of Interior jointly issued Prakas No. 161 NA on The Formalities and Procedures for Implementation of Transitional Fines on Owners or Managers of Crowded Residential Areas. This Prakas listed actions that the law will impose the penalties on the Owner or Manager of Crowded and Determined Procedure, Fines, and Competent Authority.

¹ The Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Cambodia, 2009, Article 377.

carry out fraudulent activities. These schemes can take various forms, including the impersonation of voices, images, or identities, as well as the falsification of documents. Such actions can cause significant harm to victims, affecting their finances and reputation, and may also negatively impact others.

2. OFFENSE

Offenses involving fraud via technological systems, or the use of technology as defined under this law, are punishable if the acts or activities of such Online Scams fall under the following categories:

- A. Deception involving the aim of obtaining of funds, property, services, or an obligation (Article 5);
- B. Organizing or Directing an Online Scams Center (Article 6);
- C. Recruiting or Training Others to Commit Online Scams (Article 7);
- D. Collecting Identification Documents or Personal Information Documents of Others with Malicious Intent (Article 8);
- E. Money Laundering (Article 9);
- F. Participation as a co-perpetrator (acting together with the principal offender), instigator, or accomplice; and
- G. Attempting to commit an offense (Article 12).

3. COMPETENT AUTHORITY

The Law on Combating Technology-Based Fraud, Article 3, stipulates that the competent authorities for Online Scams are Judicial Police Officers, as designated by law.

Judicial Police Officers or Civil Servants must be granted the legal authority (competence) to examine, investigate, and conduct inquiries into such fraud offenses. This authorization is issued by the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Cambodia. The procedures for carrying out these activities must comply with the criminal procedure laws of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Judicial police officers shall perform their duties in accordance with the following procedures:

- A. Examine, investigate, charge, and conduct inquiries in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure.
- B. Detain offenders for a period of 48 hours, which may be extended up to a maximum of 10 days, subject to authorization from the Prosecutor.
- C. In the event of a suspicious transaction, suspend transaction for a period not exceeding 48 hours.
- D. The holding or freezing of an account—based on a court decision—shall not exceed 48 hours.
- E. Professional confidentiality cannot hinder the enforcement of the law.

Furthermore, on 21 April 2026, the Royal Government of Cambodia issued Decision No. 49 SSR regarding the establishment of joint working groups under the Secretariat of the Commission for Combating Online Scams (“CCOS”). These are divided into four groups: (1) responsible for Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, Tboung Khmum, Monduliri, and Kro Ches provinces; (2) responsible for Preah Sihanouk,

Kampot, and Koh Kong provinces; (3) responsible for Pursat, Battambang, and Pailin provinces; and (4) responsible for Banteay Meanchey and Oddor Meanchey provinces. These joint working groups include representatives from various ministries—such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and other relevant ministries—tasked with conducting inspections, assessments, and enforcement actions to crack down on offenses within their respective regions, in accordance with the directives of the Royal Government.

In **Part Two**, we will elaborate on further key aspects of the Law on Online Scams, including the result of the law's enactment, the penalties for specific offenses, and the practical implementation procedures as stipulated in the legal instruments adopted by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

CONTACT US:

Anna & Associates Law Office

Website: www.anna-associates.com

Email: info@anna-associates.com

Tel: (+855) 99 888 737

OUR LOCATION:

Address: K Plaza Building No. 234, 7th Floor, Mao Tse Toung Blvd, Sangkat Tumnob Teuk, Khan Beoung Keng Kang, Phnom Penh, the Kingdom of Cambodia.