



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Loudoun County

Program Title: Financial and Cybercrime Unit - Justice to Victims

Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Erin McLellan

Title: Sr. Deputy County Administrator

Signature: Signed by:  
Erin McLellan  
Administrator



**Sheriff Michael L. Chapman**

## **LOUDOUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

P.O. Box 7200 | Leesburg, VA 20177  
803 Sycolin Rd SE | Leesburg, VA 20175  
Telephone 703-777-0407

# **VACo 2025 Achievement Award Nomination**

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**The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office**

**Financial and Cybercrime Unit – Justice to Victims**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Financial and Cybercrime Unit (FCU) has become a leader in combating cryptocurrency scams in Virginia, an increasingly common threat in today's digital landscape. LCSO expanded and rebranded its Financial Crimes Unit to create the Financial and Cybercrime Unit, reflecting a renewed commitment to investigating crimes involving digital assets. This strategic move allowed the agency to address the complexity of financial cybercrime better.

Detectives with strong investigative backgrounds and technical skills staff the unit. These detectives have received advanced training and national certification in cryptocurrency investigations and use specialized tools to trace blockchain transactions and dismantle criminal networks. The FCU also provides training and outreach to the public and law enforcement partners throughout Virginia and across the United States. Its structure offers a scalable model for other jurisdictions working to improve their response to financial and cyber crimes.

# VACo 2025 Achievement Award Nomination

## Criminal Justice and Public Safety

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### **The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office**

### **Financial and Cybercrime Unit – Justice to Victims**

#### **PROBLEM, CHALLENGE, OR SITUATION FACED BY THE LOCALITY**

As cryptocurrency has become more widespread, criminal schemes using digital assets have increased. Sophisticated investment, imposter, and romance scams have targeted Loudoun County residents. The anonymous and decentralized nature of cryptocurrency transactions makes it difficult for traditional investigative methods to be effective, often leaving victims without a path to recovery.

Local law enforcement agencies without specialized tools and training face serious challenges when trying to trace stolen funds or identify suspects. In one case, the LCSO Financial and Cybercrime Unit successfully recovered more than \$1.4 million for a resident who had fallen victim to a complex investment scam. This case highlights the unit's ability to combat advanced financial and cybercrimes and deliver justice to victims.

#### **INNOVATIVE APPROACH AND LEADERSHIP**

To respond to this growing challenge, LCSO expanded its existing Financial Crimes Unit, creating the Financial and Cybercrime Unit with a specific mission to address digital financial crime. Detectives already assigned to the unit were joined by newly selected

personnel, all of whom received nationally recognized training in cryptocurrency investigations. The unit uses sophisticated analytical tools to follow blockchain transactions and works closely with federal and international partners.

In addition to investigations, the FCU plays a key role in public education. Detectives present to residents, brief financial institutions, and speak at conferences to share best practices for identifying and preventing cryptocurrency-related crime. This combined focus on investigation and education has positioned the unit as a model throughout Virginia.

#### **IMPACT AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES**

Since its formation, the Financial and Cybercrime Unit has led multiple complex investigations and recovered substantial amounts of stolen funds. These efforts have strengthened community trust and improved victims' outcomes.

The unit's outreach has reached hundreds of residents and law enforcement officers, improved awareness, and increased early reporting of scams. Community members now receive faster, more informed assistance, while partner agencies are better equipped to handle similar cases in their areas.

#### **COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP**

The unit's success is built not only on internal expertise but also on strong partnerships with the FBI Cyber Task Force, U.S. Secret Service Cyber Fraud Task Force, Department of Homeland Security Benefit Fraud and Fraudulent Document Task Force, and cybercrime

professionals in the private sector. These relationships enhance information sharing, extend the unit's investigative reach, and improve responses to crimes that cross jurisdictional lines. Active participation in national working groups ensures that the unit remains current with emerging threats and investigative strategies.

## **MODEL FOR OTHERS**

The LCSO approach is grounded in specialized training, strong partnerships, innovative investigative techniques, and public education. This structure can be replicated by other agencies to build local capacity and respond effectively to digital financial crime, even with limited resources. A focus on collaboration and prevention can significantly enhance public safety.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Financial and Cybercrime Unit demonstrates innovation, leadership, and professionalism in addressing one of the most pressing criminal threats of the digital age. The unit's achievements in both investigations and outreach reflect a thoughtful, community-centered approach to modern law enforcement. Its work benefits not only Loudoun County but also the broader law enforcement community, making it a strong candidate for recognition.



**Sheriff Michael L. Chapman**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **LCSO Seizes \$1.4 Million in Groundbreaking Cryptocurrency Scam Case**

**Loudoun County, VA (February 24, 2025)** — The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) recently seized approximately \$1.4 million in cryptocurrency that had been stolen as a result of a "pig butchering" scam. To our knowledge, this is one of the first and the largest seizure of its kind in Virginia, highlighting the LCSO's commitment to pursuing justice on behalf of victims of financial and cybercrimes.

"This seizure sends a clear signal to bad actors that we will not allow our citizens to be taken advantage of and will do everything possible to get their money back," said Sheriff Mike Chapman. "If you commit fraud, especially a fraud of this magnitude, know that Loudoun County is coming for you."

This case surfaced when the victim received an unsolicited text message, addressed to the wrong person. This sparked social media communications prompting the suspect to befriend and gain the trust of the victim. The suspect encouraged the victim to explore cryptocurrency trading, guiding the victim to create an account on a trading website controlled by the scammer.

After a small test transaction demonstrated that funds could be withdrawn, the victim invested a substantial amount of additional money in cryptocurrency. The scam trading website showed significant returns on the investment, but when attempting to withdraw the assets, the victim was told that significant taxes would have to be paid in advance. This tactic is a well-documented "pig butchering" scam strategy, where scammers manipulate victims into believing they are achieving financial success to extract larger investments.

With the use of cryptocurrency and related scams on the rise nationwide, the LCSO is staying ahead of the curve by training detectives in blockchain investigations – a method of tracing these types of transactions. As of today, 100% of LCSO's Financial and Cybercrime Unit (FCU) detectives are certified in blockchain investigations. Last year, the FCU investigated 107 cryptocurrency cases with a total monetary loss of over \$13 million, up from 50 such investigations in 2023.

The LCSO urges caution when investing in cryptocurrency, and to follow these tips to avoid becoming the victim of a scam:

1. **Be Skeptical of Unsolicited Messages:** Treat any unexpected or misdirected communications with caution, especially if they lead to discussions about investment opportunities.

2. **Verify the Legitimacy of Investment Platforms:** Do not trust platforms or websites recommended by individuals you meet online without conducting thorough independent research.
3. **Avoid Sending Money to Unknown Individuals:** Never transfer funds or provide financial information to people you have not met in person.
4. **Look Out for Red Flags:** Scammers often promise high returns with minimal risk. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
5. **Consult with Professionals:** Seek advice from licensed financial advisors before making significant investments.

If you live in Loudoun County and you believe you have been targeted by a cryptocurrency scam, report it immediately to the LCSO. You can also report a crime through the website, [here](#). Prompt reporting increases the likelihood of recovering funds and identifying suspects.

**Contact:**

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office  
Media Relations and Communications Section  
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