

Which fees are real, and which are always invented

"They say I must pay a fee before my withdrawal is released. Is that normal?"

No. In a real system, fees are deducted from what you are owed. Being asked to send new money in, in order to get your existing money out, is a fraud pattern with no legitimate equivalent.

Fees that genuinely exist

Network fees, often called gas, are real. They are paid automatically out of the sending wallet at the moment of sending, and they go to the network, never to a person. You cannot pay someone else's network fee by sending them money, and nobody can hold a transfer hostage for one.

Exchange trading and withdrawal fees are real, and are deducted from your balance. Bank wire fees are real and are taken by your bank.

Fees that are always fabricated

A withdrawal fee you must fund separately. A tax payable to the platform rather than to a tax authority. An insurance premium to protect the transfer. A margin call to release a profit. A verification or activation deposit. An anti-money-laundering fee. A liquidity or gas fee payable to an unlock a balance. A conversion fee to move your own money.

None of these has a legitimate counterpart. Taxes are paid to governments, on a schedule, through a government channel — never to a trading platform as a precondition of a withdrawal.

Why it never ends

The structure guarantees a next demand. If paying released the funds, the scheme would pay out. The fee is not an obstacle before the money; the fee is the money. Each payment is followed by a new and more urgent requirement, often with a deadline and a warning that the balance will be forfeited.

Whatever you have already lost is fixed. The fee is a separate and entirely avoidable second loss. That distinction is worth holding onto, because the pressure applied at this stage is designed to make the earlier loss feel recoverable if you just pay once more.

How this gets used against people

This is the mechanism of advance-fee fraud, and it is the closing stage of most pig-butcher cases. It is also the structure of nearly every 'recovery service' that approaches someone after a loss.

What you can check yourself

- A real fee is deducted from your balance. It is not wired in separately.
- Network fees are paid by the sender, to the network, automatically. Nobody can invoice you for one.
- If paying this fee is supposed to release money, ask why it cannot be deducted from that money. There is no good answer.

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Disclaimer

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