



This article presents general guidelines for Ohio nonprofit organizations as of the date written and should not be construed as legal advice. Always consult an attorney to address your particular situation.

LEGAL ALERT

Trademark Scams and Misleading Communications Can Cost You

Private companies and trademark scammers can use publicly available information to mislead your nonprofit into paying fees you mistakenly think are required or are being paid to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”).

How can you tell the difference between these communications and those from the USPTO? All official correspondence about your trademark application or registration will be from the “United States Patent and Trademark Office” in Alexandria, Virginia. Emails will be from the domain “@uspto.gov”.

To convince you otherwise, these communications often use official-sounding terms like “U.S.,” “Patent,” “Trademark,” “Agency” among others. They also contain publicly available information about your organization and its trademark application or registration.

What do you do if you receive a communication? First, do not pay anything until you can confirm it truly is from the USPTO. If it is related to a trademark that PBPO assisted with, please contact us. You should keep the envelope, letter, or email and can report a suspicious communication to the FTC and to state consumer protection authorities.

For more information, visit [uspto.gov](https://www.uspto.gov).

Need Legal Advice?

If you are a PBPO client and have questions regarding the content of this article or need legal assistance, please contact us at info@pbpohio.org or (513) 977-0304.

Not a Client? Apply to become a client by submitting a [Request for Legal Assistance online](#), or contact us at info@pbpohio.org.