

- Bureau of Motor Vehicles
- Emergency Management Agency
- Emergency Medical Services
- Office of Criminal Justice Services
- Ohio Homeland Security
- Ohio Investigative Unit
- Ohio State Highway Patrol

1970 West Broad Street
P.O. Box 182081
Columbus, Ohio 43218-2081
(614) 466-3383
www.publicsafety.ohio.gov

July 17, 2014

Sent via email: nc@coinneo.com

RE: Bitcoins

Dear Mr. Chand:

Your inquiries regarding the use of Bitcoins as payment for alcohol have been forwarded to me for response.

The state of Ohio has not taken a position regarding the use of Bitcoins. Rather, in keeping with guidance from the IRS that Bitcoins are a form of “property” and not “currency” for tax purposes, the Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) may investigate the use of Bitcoins as monetary payment for alcohol. If the Investigative Unit issues a citation out of such an investigation, a liquor permit holder may challenge the citation, and ultimately the Ohio Liquor Control Commission, and possibly an Ohio court, will determine whether the use was permissible. These comments are limited to the monetary payment for alcohol, and the Investigative Unit cannot speak to any other risks or legal consequences of accepting or using Bitcoins.

Further, the Ohio Department of Public Safety does not issue advisory opinions or rulings regarding the interpretation of any Ohio laws, including what constitutes an acceptable form of payment for alcohol. Through the OIU, the Department is responsible for enforcing the state’s liquor laws and rules. As legal counsel for the Department, I am unable to provide you with legal advice regarding the use of Bitcoins as payment for alcohol. I encourage you to speak with your own legal counsel to familiarize yourself with the provisions of Ohio’s Liquor Control Act and its accompanying rules in regards to the sale of alcohol in the State of Ohio.

The use of Bitcoins as a form of payment is an emerging issue, and the Department will continue to follow its developments. Thank you for your time.



Anne Vitale
Associate Legal Counsel

Mission Statement

“to save lives, reduce injuries and economic loss, to administer Ohio’s motor vehicle laws and to preserve the safety and well being of all citizens with the most cost-effective and service-oriented methods available.”

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