

The Top Frauds & Scams

Fraud is Happening

- According to the FTC, nearly **25 million** Americans are the victims of consumer fraud each year.

Why Report It?

- A growing number of older Americans become victims of financial fraud each year. Many of these victims never report their victimization and, consequently, do not receive the specialized services and intervention they need.

The Top Frauds & Scams

What we'll cover today:

- What are some of the different scams?
- How do you avoid them?
- What do you do if you might be a victim?



Con Artists Target the Elderly

This crime has a significant impact on the older population who may be incapable of recovering financial losses. The emotional impact of elder fraud can be traumatic as well.

Fraudulent telemarketers direct anywhere from 56 to 80 percent of their calls at older Americans.

Dumpster Diving: Trash or Treasure?

- Pre-approved credit card offers + loans – thieves complete the application and have card sent to them at another address.
- Bank statements + checks – thieves now have your bank account numbers. Thieves now can create duplicate bogus checks.



Medicare Fraud

- Medical identity fraud and Medicare fraud cost all of us over \$60 billion every year, and that figure doesn't account for the hassle and disruptions in health care to the victims.
- Know the "red flags" to look for on Medicare Summary Notices (MSN)
 - Review the MSN – are there?
 - names of doctors or facilities that you have never been to?
 - dates of service where you weren't at the facility?
 - procedures listed you didn't have done or listings for medical equipment you didn't get?
- If you see a discrepancy – call your doctor or provider – if you know them. If the error doesn't appear to be a mistake, it isn't up to you to determine if it's fraud; all you have to do is report it to authorities.
 - Call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227
 - Contact Senior Medicare Patrol – www.SMPResource.org
- For more information check out www.aarp.org/fightfraud.

Pre-recorded Telemarketing Messages

- Effective December 1, 2008, any telemarketing call that delivers a pre-recorded message must include a quick and easy way to opt out of receiving future calls.
- Effective September 1, 2009, any pre-recorded messages will be prohibited unless a consumer previously has agreed to accept such calls from the seller. Some expectations apply such as service appointment reminders, cancelled flight notifications and health care reminders.

Internet Auctions

- The Scam:
 - Goods not as promised
 - Goods never arrive
- Avoid It:
 - Check out the seller
 - Know terms of sale
 - Pay with credit card or through escrow service

Phishing

- The Scam:
 - E-mails
 - Update/validate information
 - Look-alike website
- Avoid It:
 - Don't follow that link!
 - Don't give out your information
 - Remember: legitimate companies won't e-mail to ask for your personal information

Sweepstakes, Foreign Lottery or Money Offers

- The Scam:
 - You may have won!
 - We need your bank account #
 - We need money up front to pay “fees”...
- Avoid It: “If it sounds too good to be true...”
 - Almost NEVER real
 - ALL foreign lotteries are illegal
 - It’s often completely illegal – avoid it!
 - Never pay a fee for a “free” prize
 - Don’t provide any personal information!

IGNORE - DELETE - DESTROY - SHRED

Counterfeit Checks

- Consumer (you) deposits the fake check
- Bank can't tell if it's fake - it's made to look like an authentic check
- Bank which "issued" check will eventually identify the check as fake, and will not pay
- Consumer (you) must reimburse his/her bank the entire amount of the check

A Counterfeit Check



⑈049229⑈ ⑆043310139⑆ 2900010

Charitable Giving

Courts have consistently ruled it's NOT illegal for a charity to spend as much as 99 percent of its revenue on fund raising and administration, citing First Amendment protection.

Charity Fraud

- The Scam:
 - A real charity?
 - Fundraisers for hire?
- Avoid It:
 - Ask questions, and take your time
 - Get information in writing
 - Don't give credit card or bank account information

Charitable Gift Giving

- Don't be fooled by names that look impressive or that resemble well-known charities.
- Never write a check to an individual or send cash.
- Ask questions and ask for a copy of their financial report.
- Never contribute to an organization that claims it needs the money right now and will send someone to get it.
- **Don't bend to pressure**. Ask the caller to mail you information that can be used as evidence.
- Keep all copies of receipts, canceled checks and bank statements.

TIPS FOR MAKING SMART DONATIONS

- The Charitable Trust Division of the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office has compiled a list of tips to assist the public in making wise donations.
- Check out charities at the following web sites:
 - **www.charitynavigator.org**
 - **<http://us.bbb.org>**
 - **www.doj.nh.gov/charitable**
 - **www.guidestar.org**
 - **www.charitywatch.org**

Work-at-Home Scams

- Easy money!
- Lots of promises
- Lots of upfront (hidden) costs
- Never pre-pay or send money
- If it seems too good to be true...

What if you're a victim of a scam?

- Whenever you suspect fraud, notify:
 - State Attorney General -1-888-468-4454
 - Federal Trade Commission 1-877-FTC-HELP
- You may need a lawyer
 - AARP members: Legal Services Network
 - If over 60, check on free legal services from legal aid NH Legal Assistance – 1-888-353-9944

Medical Identity Theft

- **How Thieves Steal Your Medical Identity**
 - Stealing your purse or wallet
 - Luring you to give out your medical identification with promises of free equipment, free tests, free consultations, free gift cards--anything free
 - Convincing you to give out your medical numbers by leading you to believe they are a government official or work for your insurance company--when they don't
 - Claiming to be conducting a health survey but insist that they need your number to participate
 - Asking to borrow your health insurance card
 - Taking medical documents from the trash

Protect Your Medical Identity

- Guard your insurance card like you do your credit cards
 - Carry your medical number only when you need it
 - Give your medical identification numbers only to the medical professionals you know.
 - Let only your medical professionals review your medical records
 - Shred any medical documents you no longer need.
- **What You Should Do If You Think Your Medical Identity Has Been Stolen**
 - Contact your insurance company, Medicare or your state Medicaid office if your insurance card is stolen.

Identity Theft Contacts

- Contact the Identity Theft Resource Center at:
 - 858-693-7935, or
 - www.idtheftcenter.org
- Contact Federal Trade Commission at:
 - 800-IDTHEFT, or
 - www.consumer.gov/idtheft
- Contact Fraud Units of Credit Reporting Bureaus at:
 - EQUIFAX: 800-525-6285
 - EXPERIAN: 888-397-3742
 - TRANS UNION: 8 00-680-7289
- For fraudulent use of checks, contact:
 - Checkwrite: 8 00-766-2748
 - Chexsystems: 8 00-428-9623
 - Equifax Telecredit: 8 00-437-5120
 - National Processing Co.: 800-526-5380
 - SCAN: 800-262-7771

Identity Theft Procedures

1. Buy a notebook to use as a telephone log and keep notes on each contact
2. File a police report in each jurisdiction where the theft occurred
3. Close all accounts. Phone each company's fraud division. File a fraud-dispute form ASAP
4. Request a new driver's license and have a fraud report attached to your driving record
5. Send certified, return receipt requested letter to each person contacted, summarizing each conversation
6. Notify check-verification firms about any fraudulent checks (Int'l. Check Service @ 800-526-5380; Telecheck @ 800-927-0755; Certegy Check Services @ 800-437-5120)
7. Order credit reports from: www.annualcreditreport.com, or 1-877-322-8228. To do so in writing, get an Annual Credit Report Request Form from ftc.gov/credit, fill it out and mail it to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281
8. Have fraud alerts placed on all accounts and make sure new ones are not opened without notification
9. Refuse to pay fraudulent charges. Documenting the above helps
10. Contact the Identity Theft Resource Center @ 858-693-7935 or at www.idtheftcenter.org for more tips

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS TO REPORT FRAUD

UPS

E-mail: fraud@ups.com

Phone number: 1-800-742-5877

FedEx

E-mail: abuse@fedex.com

Phone numbers:

Main number: 1-800-463-3339

Hotline: 1-866-519-6500

Fax number: 1-901-375-6370

U. S. MAIL FRAUD

Mail Complaint to:

Criminal Investigations Service Center
222 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 1250
Chicago, IL 60606

Web site: usps.gov/postalinspectors.org

New Hampshire Postal Inspector's Office
(603) 644-4036

Limiting Access

- FTC's Do Not Call Registry - Register at: <https://www.donotcall.gov/>, or 888-382-1222
- File a complaint at: 888-CALL-FCC
- To Stop Credit Card Offers 888-5-OPT-OUT
- Write to firms you do business with that you do not want info about you sold to others
- ProQuo.com - Free service that allows you to opt out of credit card solicitations, catalogs, Valpak coupons, sweepstakes announcements, etc.
- CatalogChoice.org - Focuses on ridding your mailbox of unwanted catalogs.
- GreenDimes.com – Promises to reduce junk mail by 90% in 90 days (\$20 annual fee).

Limiting Access cont.

- To remove your name from national mailing lists-
www.dmachoice.org or write to:
Mail Preference Service
P.O. Box 643
Carmel, NY 10512
- For problems with a mail order company, write to:
Mail Order Action Line
1111 19th Street, N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20036
- Additional information on charitable organizations can be accessed at: <http://www.doj.nh.gov/charitable/consumers.html> and www.give.org.

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Thank You!

**Please share this information with your network
– knowledge is power!**