FRAUD PREVENTION

Fraud happens. Sadly it can happen to the most innocent of people. Don't let it happen to you. We've listed a few common fraud scenarios below so you can stay apprised of common industry scams.

COMMON FRAUD SCENARIOS

ONLINE DATING SCA

It's everything you've hoped for and more. She's beautiful, smart, witty, and you two just "get" each other. Sure, you've never met her in person — but that doesn't matter. You've been talking to her for months, exchanged pictures, maybe even spoken on the phone. Sometime soon you'll get to meet, but right now she's on the other side of the world, no doubt doing humanitarian work. Then, there is a problem. She's got an emergency and needs some funds. Not a lot, just a couple hundred dollars. Can you do that? And then the next week, someone got sick. You don't mind covering that too, right? Guess what? That beautiful woman you fell in love with in Ghana? She's probably a bearded man. He's built your trust, and now he's ready to take you for all your worth.

Get common tips and articles related to online dating scams from the Federal Trade Commission.

LOTTERY & SWEEPSTAKES SCAMS

You got amazing news in your e-mail today. You've won the lottery! The grand prize is enormous, and you have already begun dreaming of what you might do with that money. You're not quite sure that you remember playing the lottery, but oh well, you've already forgotten what you had for breakfast; it would be easy to forget such a thing. There's only one catch: the sender needs some funds from you in order to cash out your prize. Just a small amount. And what's \$1,000 when you're about to get millions? Find more tips and information on how to avoid this all-too-common scam.

THE RELATIVE IN NEED SCAM

Your grandchild is traveling in Mexico and has suddenly run out of money. She sends you an urgent e-mail or phone call saying she has an emergency and asks for money. You don't remember her telling you she was going to travel to Mexico, but you're worried for her safety and want to ensure she's OK. So you send her a couple hundred dollars. What's a couple hundred dollars when it comes to your grandchild's safety?

Learn if you are being conned in a family emergency scam.

THE MYSTERY SHOPPER SCAM

Lucky you! You just landed a new gig as a mystery shopper and have been assigned your first task. All you need to do evaluate the customer service of a local retail store. Sounds easy enough, right? There is just one catch. You were sent a check or money order with instructions to deposit it, yet you find out the amount is more than it should be. So, now you need to send money back to the sender. Sounds a little fishy, but you don't think too much of it. Yet, as soon as you send your transaction, you learn that the original check was counterfeit and now you can't get back the money you just sent. So now you're out for both amounts.

THE VEHICLE PURCHASE SCAM

Your fervent internet search for a great deal on your dream car has paid off! You found the car you want at a much lower price than what your local dealership is willing to offer. You contact the seller and he/she tells you to send either a down payment and/or the service fees for the application loan through a money transfer so you can avoid sales tax and get a better rate. He or she may even send you a receipt. Do not send a down payment or service fees via a money transfer. You won't get your dream vehicle and you won't get your money back.

THE INTERNET PURCHASE SCAM

You've found a terrific price on an apartment rental online and decide to move forward with signing the lease. Only the leasee is actually a scammer who asks you to pay for the first month with a money transfer and that too-good-tobe- true apartment doesn't actually exist. Be wary when shopping online and someone asks you to pay with a money transfer or even send a deposit to an individual or fake business. This can happen with any online purchases – a puppy, a vacation rental, a timeshare or a car. You name it. Do not wire money for internet purchases. You won't get the merchandise and you won't get your money back.

THE NEWSPAPER ADS SCAM

It's Sunday morning, you've just poured yourself a fresh cup of coffee and are ready to sit down to breakfast, newspaper in hand. Turning to the classifieds, you notice an ad for a new, stainless steel refrigerator for a price that seems too good to be true. You think about how you've needed a new refrigerator for some time and decide to take the plunge. You purchase it. Sure, you're a little skeptical because you're buying it from a stranger and even stranger yet – they've asked you to transfer money to them for the

purchase. Never use a money transfer to purchase something from a stranger. You may never get the item and you'll lose your money.

CHARITY SCAM

A recent natural disaster has left an entire nation reeling to rebuild in the aftermath of destruction and you want to do your part to help by donating money. Sadly enough, natural disasters such as floods, tornados or hurricanes often result in scammers staging "charitable" organizations that prey on well-intentioned people. Your heart goes out to these people who have just lost everything. You receive a call or a letter from a charitable organization telling you exactly where to transfer money. Be sure to never send money to people or organizations that you don't know. Instead, contact the American Red Cross or another trusted organization that you know and that you understand how the funds are being collected and used. Chances are, if you transfer money to an organization you don't know, your money will not go to the intended cause but rather into the pockets of scammers.

Find additional tips to ensure you are sending your money to a reputable organization.

THE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER SCAM

You receive a check or money order through the mail as and advanced payment for that awesome job you've just landed – or for the merchandise you're selling through an online ad. The only catcher is that the amount of the check is more than it should be so the scammer tells you to deposit the check and then wire the amount they've "overpaid" back to them. Before you know it, you realize that the check or money order is counterfeit and – worse yet – you can't get back the money you sent through the money transfer.

THE ELDER ABUSE SCAM

While this scam can take on many shapes, it's critical to know that nearly a third of all telemarketing fraud victims are age 60 or older. Be careful about sending money to a stranger in exchange for the promise of such things as home improvement, predatory lending, estate planning or even just a large sum of money to build your "nest egg." Don't ever let a stranger manage your finances and assets. Scammers will try hard to manipulate you into turning over property and/or money, which can leave your checking account or entire life savings wiped out within minutes. Never trust your money to someone you don't know.

Learn the critical steps necessary to keep elders stay safe from this common scam.

THE GUARANTEED LOAN

Are you sending money because you were "guaranteed" a credit or loan? If so, be cautious! It is highly unlikely that you would ever need to send money in order to receive a true credit or loan.

MONEY TRANSFER SCAMS

Money transfer scams take on many shapes and forms. What's worse, fraudsters are continuously learning new tricks and techniques. It can be very difficult to know when a specific situation is in fact a scam. That's why it's very important to stay one step ahead of tricky scammers.

Consult the Federal Trade Commission's portal of blog posts and articles on the most common and the most recent money transfer scams.

IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft occurs when someone assumes your identity to perform a fraud or other criminal act. Criminals can get the information they need to assume your identity from a variety of sources, including by stealing your wallet, rifling through your trash, or by compromising your credit or bank information. They may approach you in person, by telephone, or on the Internet and ask you for the information.

TELEMARKETING SCAM

You receive a phone call from an unknown caller and are somewhat skeptical to answer. At the last minute, you decide to pick up the phone and to your astonishment – you have won a free cruise. What luck! All you need to do to receive the cruise is pay for postage and handling to receive the "formal" offer. Sounds easy enough. The convincing voice on the other end has now conned you into giving them your financial information to pay for the postage. When you transfer money to people you do not know or giver personal or financial information to unknown callers, you increase your chances of becoming a victim of telemarketing fraud.

Here are some tips on avoiding telemarketing fraud.

Be aware that your personal information is often brokered to telemarketers through third parties. If you have been victimized once, be wary of persons who call offering to help you recover your losses for a fee paid in advance.

Find more information on specific examples of telemarketing scams.

PROTECT YOURSELF

FRAUD TIPS

WHERE TO GET HELP IF YOU GET SCAMMED.

If you are the victim of a money transfer scam, first report the incident to your local police. Next, file a report with the various resources listed below. And always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to give us a call right away at 855-355-2145.

REPORT FRAUD

If you've been the victim of fraud, you need to report it. Here is a list of useful resources to aid you in reporting fraud.

1. Call the police

Start with your local police. All money transfer scams should be reported to the police.

2. Contact Xe USA's fraud department

We want to know about it so that we can do everything in our power to make sure it doesn't happen again. Contact us by phone at 1-844-832-1367 or by e-mail at transfers.na@xe.com

3. Federal Trade Commission

File a complaint online with the Federal Trade Commission or contact them by phone at 1-877-FTC-HELP.

4. Internet Crime Complaint Center (ICCC)

If you were a victim of fraud that began with contact through the internet, you should file a report with the ICCC.