



# CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE BULLETIN

Top Frauds Affecting Middle Agers

2020-09-28

FRAUD: RECOGNIZE, REJECT, REPORT

Since it has been six months since March – Fraud Prevention Month, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre would like to remind the public of the top fraud types affecting middle agers (30-59):

**Extortion:** Extortion happens when someone unlawfully obtains money, property or services from a person, entity or institution through coercion. *SIN Scam:* Consumers are receiving recorded messages about their Social Insurance Number (SIN) being linked to fraudulent or criminal activity. The fraudsters are claiming to be different federal government agencies. There may be threats of an arrest warrant or imprisonment, if the consumer does not cooperate with the fraudster's demands. They may request personal information (SIN, DOB, address etc.) or request that consumers empty their bank accounts and deposit the funds to be cleared from illegal activity and returned once their investigation is complete.

**Romance:** Fraudsters use every type of dating or social networking site available to contact their victims. Their accounts are created using photos stolen from legitimate people. Their background stories often mimic the victim's and they are often in the military, work overseas, or are successful business people. They quickly profess their love to gain their victims' trust, affection, and money. This type of fraud relies heavily on victim emotions and may last for months, years, or until the victim has nothing left to give. The fraudsters will always run into trouble and are unable to refund their victims; however, they will continue to make empty promises and ask for more money.

**Investment:** Any false, deceptive, misleading or fraudulent investment opportunity, often offering higher than normal or true monetary returns. Victims often lose most or all of their money. Investors run the added risk of having their identity stolen, accumulating losses for unauthorized withdrawals on their credit cards and incurring high interest payments on investments that do not exist.

**Merchandise:** Fraudsters may place advertisements on popular classified sites or social networks. They may also create websites that share the look and feel of legitimate manufacturers. Fraudsters will generate traffic to their products by advertising them at deep discounts. Consumers may receive counterfeit products, lesser valued & unrelated goods, or nothing at all.

**Service:** These frauds often involve offers for telecommunications, internet, finance, medical, and energy services. In addition, extended warranties, insurance and sales services may also fall under this category.



Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
Gendarmerie royale du Canada



Competition Bureau  
Canada

Bureau de la concurrence  
Canada



Ontario Provincial Police

Canada

## How to protect yourself

- Fraudsters use call-spoofing to mislead consumers. This technology is easily available. Never assume that the phone numbers appearing on your call display are accurate.
- No government agency will contact you and tell you that your SIN is blocked or suspended, nor will they threaten you with legal action.
- Never provide personal information over the phone to an unknown caller.
- No government or law enforcement agency will demand an immediate payment or to submit all of your money for investigation.
- No government or law enforcement agency will request payment by Bitcoin, a money service business, or gift cards (ie. iTunes, Google Play, Steam).
- How to recognize the CRA fraud: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/corporate/security/protect-yourself-against-fraud.html>
- Beware of individuals quickly professing their love for you.
- Beware of individuals who claim to be wealthy, but need to borrow money.
- When trying to setup an in-person meeting, be suspicious if they always provide you with reasons to cancel.
- Never send intimate photos or video of yourself as they may be used to blackmail you.
- Never accept and send money to a third party under any circumstances.
- Be careful when asked to provide personal or financial information to reclaim your investment profits.
- Beware of opportunities offering higher than normal returns.
- Beware of any urgency pressuring you to make an investment so that you don't miss out.
- The Canadian Securities Administrators (CSA) encourages all investors to visit their National Registration Search Tool ([www.aretheyregistered.ca](http://www.aretheyregistered.ca)).
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Beware of pop-ups that direct you away from the current website.
- Consumers should verify the URL and seller contact information.
- Search for any warnings posted online and read reviews before making a purchase.
- Spelling mistakes and grammatical errors are potential indicators of a fraudulent website.
- Use a credit card when shopping online. Consumers are offered fraud protection and may receive a refund.
- Never allow an individual to remotely access your computer. If you are experiencing problems with your operating system, bring it to a local technician.
- Verify any incoming calls with your credit card company by calling the number on the back of the card. Be sure to end the original call and wait a few minutes before dialing.
- Only a credit card company can adjust the interest rate on their own product.
- Research all companies and contractors offering services before hiring them.
- Learn [more tips and tricks for protecting yourself](#).

If you think you or someone you know has been a victim of fraud, please contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or report online at [www.antifraudcentre.ca-centreantifraude.ca](http://www.antifraudcentre.ca-centreantifraude.ca).