

Scams And Fraud

Presented by
The Better Business Bureau
Serving Wisconsin



Better Business Bureau®

Start With TrustSM

Who We Are

The BBB is a nonprofit organization that helps people find businesses and charities they can trust. Began in 1912.

Core Services

- BBB business & charity reviews
- dispute resolution
- advertising review
- Investigate bad businesses, send out p.r.'s/work with media
- Create standards for good, ethical businesses
- Advance marketplace trust



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Why Scammers Target Seniors

1 in 5 seniors have been victims of fraud.

Perceptions & Assumptions:

- More assets & disposable income
- Excellent credit
- Polite, well-mannered, trusting
- Less likely to report
- Isolation, dependency or fear
- Loss of physical or mental acuity



Some Common Scams Targeting Seniors



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Door-to-Door sellers

- Asphalt pavers*, handyman services, tree trim/stump removal, vacuum cleaners, magazines, meat
- Beware of these common sales tactics:
 - “leftover materials”
 - price is good for today only!
 - Help me win a scholarship/award
- Check for licenses and local address
- Check with BBB.org
- BBB complaints: Products/workmanship are inferior.



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Tech Support Scams

- Scammers call, claim to be computer tech, associated with well-known company like Microsoft or Apple. Other scammers send pop-up messages, warn about computer problems. They say they've detected viruses/malware on your computer. Claim to be "tech support" and ask you to give them remote access to your computer.
- They diagnose a non-existent problem and ask you to pay for unnecessary – or even harmful – services.
- **Don't click on any links, don't give control of your computer and don't send any money.**



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Travel Scams



- Travel/vacation clubs, timeshares
- Common complaints to BBB:
 - Dates/locations not available
 - Accommodations substandard
 - More expensive (and costs rising each year)
- Timeshare resales. Company says buyer is “guaranteed”.

ONLINE PURCHASE SCAMS

- Google what you’re looking for
- Be careful who you buy from. Do some checking first!
- Items either don’t arrive, are substandard or counterfeit



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Telemarketing Scams

- Robocalls: What are they? If you answer the phone and hear a recorded message instead of a live person, it's a robocall.
- Report it to FTC Do Not Call: 1-888-382-1222 or donotcall.gov
- Nomorobo & Blocking (Nomorobo.com: service that hangs up on or blocks illegal robocaller or telemarketing calls from calling
- Can you trust your Caller ID? NO!

“I hope that telemarketer calls back.”



Said no one ever.



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“Free” trial offers

- For anti-aging creams, vitamins, herbal remedies, teeth whitening products, acne medicine, etc.
- Infomercials, online ads, pop-ups and websites (when you Google)
- Read the fine print – recurring shipments, approximately \$100/month
- Lots of reports to BBB Scam Tracker



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Grandparent Scam

- a/k/a Emergency Scam. Caller identifies him/herself as your grandchild.
- States he/she is in trouble and needs money.
- Persuasive – able to overcome any objections you have
- Requests you “not tell” the parents
- Instructs you to wire transfer funds, pay with credit card or gift cards



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Imposter Scams

- Scammer pretends to be someone he/she is not.
- IRS, tech support, FBI, Medicare –etc/
- Email, phone calls, pop-ups
- Spoofing phone numbers
- Don't click on pop-ups or links.
- Asks you to wire money, purchase pre-paid debit cards, give credit card or account numbers
- Romance scams



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Charity Scams

- Often occur after a natural disaster or tragic event.
- Ask questions and do your research. Check with the BBB's Wise Giving Alliance – www.give.org.
-20 Standards of Charity Accountability.
- Is this a charity or professional fundraiser?
- Do not feel intimidated to give. Do your research to ensure your hard-earned money is going to good cause.



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Investment Scams

- Common sales tactics:
 - Too-good-to-be-true or guaranteed returns
 - Social consensus (if everyone is doing it...it must be good)
 - Reciprocity – free lunches
 - Big pay off/high rate of return
 - Source credibility



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Data Breaches

- Happen daily (Target, Uber, Anthem, Home Depot, Equifax)
- Always get a free credit report:
www.annualcreditreport.com (once per year, from each)
- Consider a credit freeze (blocks access to your credit report)
- Watch for scammers - pretending to be from the company



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Savvy Seniors

What can you do?

- Register phone with Do Not Call Registry, 1-888-382-1222 or donotcall.gov. Report all violators!
- Consider Nomorobo or blocking phone numbers.
- Screen your calls with Caller ID or answering machine.
- Don't succumb to high pressure sales tactics. Develop a "refusal script" – helps you control the conversation.
- Never give personal or financial information unless you initiate the phone call.



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Savvy Seniors

What ELSE can you do?

- Use secure payment methods. Never send money by wire transfer or reloadable debit cards. Use a credit card for additional protections.
- Always safeguard your personal information – social security number, bank info
- Do not trust strangers that call
- ALWAYS check out companies beforehand with BBB – bbb.org, 414-847-6000 or 800-273-1002
- **TAKE TIME TO REPORT IT!**
www.bbb.org/scamtracker



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Other Resources

- www.annualcreditreport.com or 1-877-322-8228
- WI Dept of Agriculture Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) 800-422-7128
- www.medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE
- Opt out of prescreened credit/insurance offers: 888-567-8688
- Reduce junk mail: Direct Marketing Association, www.dmachoice.org
- Search Wisconsin court records: wcca.wicourts.gov



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Thank You!



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