



HOW TO AVOID BEING A VICTIM

There are a few simple steps to avoid being scammed.

- Government agencies will never ask you to send cash, wire transfers, gift cards, gold / precious metals, Bitcoin, stock shares, or anything else of value.

“IF SOMETHING IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, THEN IT PROBABLY IS.”

- If something is too good to be true, then it probably is. Being told you will be receiving a large amount of money and you must pay a certain amount of money to receive it is a classic scam.
- Do not click on a weblink if you are unsure of its origin.
- Do not provide your credit card or bank account number to persons calling you on the phone. If they report your card is compromised, hang up and call the number on the back of your credit card.
- If you are told you have, or will have a warrant, hang up and call your local police department. Police can look up this information and tell you right away if you have a warrant. If someone makes a threat that you will have a warrant if you don't pay them money, rest assured this is a scam artist attempting to trick you.

FAST FACTS:

More than 420,000 people in the United States reported **falling victim to fraud or financial scams** in 2023.

Go to reportfraud.ftc.gov and file an online report.

Do not provide your credit card or bank account number to persons calling you on the phone.



Visit [KENTWA.GOV/DEPARTMENTS/POLICE-DEPARTMENT/COMMUNITY-EDUCATION](https://kentwa.gov/departments/police-department/community-education)

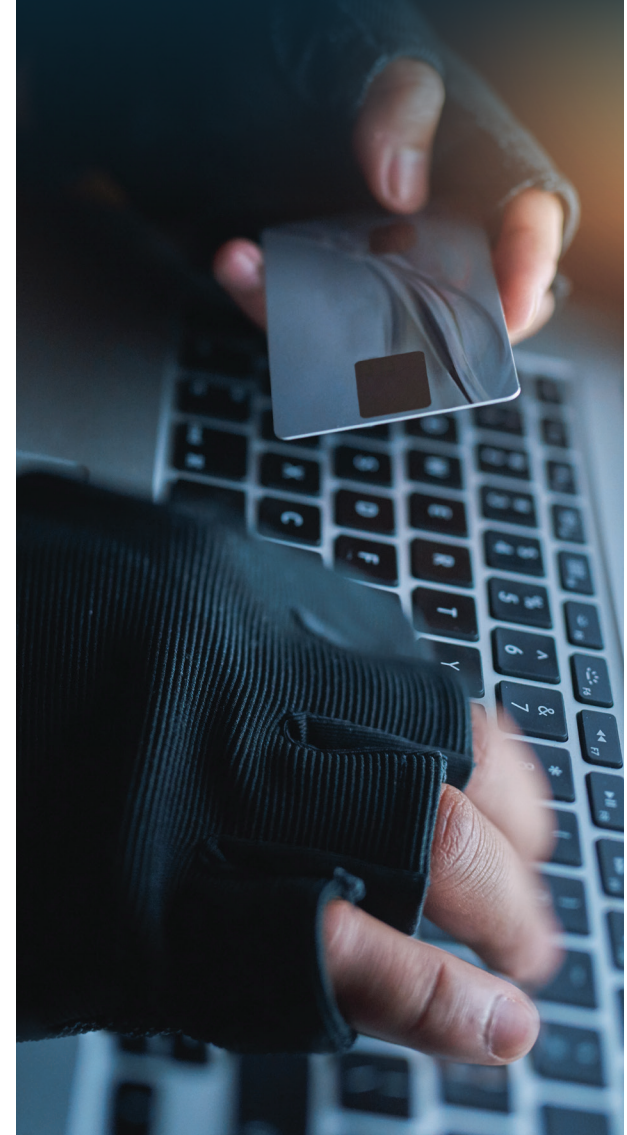
or Scan the QR code below to visit our Community Education page



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SCAM PREVENTION

TIPS, TRICKS & BEST PRACTICES



FINANCIAL FRAUD IN THE UNITED STATES

Are you a victim? Or are you concerned you may become one?

In the United States in 2023, over 420,000 citizens reported being victims of fraud or financial scams. The total reported loss of money exceeded 8 billion dollars.

This brochure is created to help citizens become aware of financial fraud occurring in the United States, how to recognize and avoid becoming a victim, and what to do in the case you have been victimized.

Only through awareness and caution can we avoid the pitfalls of these scams. The scams can be very convincing or even frightening. Victims at times are fearful of contacting law enforcement, believing they could be in trouble with the law. Many victims are too embarrassed to report incidents, but without reporting there's no recourse.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FALL FOR THE SCAM

You are not alone, and we are here to help.

- Thousands upon thousands of people fall victim to scammers every year. It is very important to report these incidents. Local and federal agencies are working to find and discontinue these operations, even though most are overseas.
- Call 911 and report the crime immediately.
- Go to **ic3.gov** and file an online report. Each report is reviewed by the FBI in order to help them connect your crime with others.
- Go to **reportfraud.ftc.gov** and file an online report.
- File a report with your bank and/or financial institution immediately.
- Wire transfers, money orders, gift cards, and other online purchases can often be reversed if you're quick enough. Visit the Kent Police Department website for additional information on how to do this. **kentwa.gov/departments/police-department/community-education**

**OR SCAN THE QR CODE
TO VISIT COMMUNITY
EDUCATION PAGE:**



COMMON SCAMS

What they are and how to identify them.

Romance Scam

A mysterious online person entices victims into a virtual relationship with someone who poses as a member of the military, a government official, or someone famous. They often state they are located overseas. During the online affair, the person will coerce/convince the victim into sending them money, by claiming they are trapped somewhere without access to funds or resources to get home. They request money for travel to come see the victim but will always have an excuse to need more money.

Rental/Real Estate Scam

There are advertisements that are set up by the fraudster listing a house for rent. The rent is often low, which motivates the victim to hurry to secure it. The fraudster will convince the victim into sending a deposit, first and last month's rent for a home that is for actual rent through a legitimate company or had previously been for sale.

Lottery Scam

Congratulations! You've won a lottery sweepstakes. Once you send us a check for \$20,000 to cover taxes and fees, we'll send you \$250,000 in winnings. Sadly, many victims are fooled into believing this is true and lose thousands of dollars in the hopes of becoming rich.

Old Friend or Relative Scam.

The fraudster reviews social media posts and profiles to locate potential victims. They discover that the victim has a grandson, or nephew. They contact the victim and pose as that family member, claiming they are in financial trouble. They trick the victim into believing they are sending money to their relative to help them.

Old Friend or Relative Scam. (Cont.)

Or you receive an email from an "old friend" who claims they are benefitting from taking advantage of a program/business opportunity that will give/earn them large amounts of money. The fraudster adds a link to the communication, which leads to a mock website which is set up to convince the victim that if they send a small amount of money, a large amount will be sent to them.

*Like with society and technology, scams are changing and evolving with the times. You may see a combination or elements of the listed scams when contacted by a scammer. If you think you are possibly being scammed, and it is not one of the listed or potential variations, please contact your police department before responding to the potential scammer.

Government Impersonation:

Phone calls claiming to be from the government can be unnerving, even frightening. Most of us strive to obey the law and keep out of trouble. Scammers posing as government agents use this fear to trick victims into believing they owe money for any number of reasons.

Investment Schemes:

The thrill of the crypto-currency stock market created hope and dreams of being rich with little effort and investment. Persons posing as investors use this dream to entice victims to send money to them with the belief their money is being invested into cryptocurrency, and they will receive a large payout.

Computer Takeover:

This scam has become more prevalent recently. Victims are tricked into downloading programs or providing access to their computer to scammers posing as computer technicians. These fraudsters seize the victim's computer remotely, and then coerce them into sending money.

STAY ALERT & VISIT:

**KENTWA.GOV/DEPARTMENTS/POLICE-
DEPARTMENT/COMMUNITY-EDUCATION**

TENS OF THOUSANDS FALL VICTIM TO SCAMMERS EACH YEAR; AWARENESS AND CAUTION ARE KEY TO AVOIDING THESE PITFALLS.