

# Scams and Frauds

## How to Spot / How to Report

**IRS scam:** Victim receives a call from someone claiming to be from the IRS. Demands money. Tip: IRS never calls demanding money.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and to the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Section ([irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov))

**IRS Identity Theft:** Tax-related identity theft happens when someone steals your personal information to commit tax fraud. Your taxes can be affected if your Social Security number is used to file a fraudulent return or to claim a refund or credit.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and to the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Section ([irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov))

**Family Emergency Scam (Grandparent scam):** Caller claims to be a family member or a friend of a family member. Caller reports that they are in jail or at a hospital. Requests money. Tip: Call other family members to confirm.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and if monies are wired, also report to the F.B.I. (FBI Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](https://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323)

**Lottery/Sweepstakes Scam:** Scammer convinces victim that they have won a sweepstakes (money or prize). They demand money to cover taxes or to cover delivery charges. Tip: Never pay to collect a prize.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and if monies are wired, also report to the F.B.I. (FBI Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](https://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323)

**Home repair Scam:** Bogus contractor claims you need repairs. They collect money and never do the job or do a substandard job. Tip: Check for business license and research.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and file a report with the Michigan Attorney General ([www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (517) 373-1110).

**Love Interest/Friendship Scam:** Scammers create a fake profile on dating sites. They profess their love quickly and request money for an emergency or to travel to meet. Tip (warning signs): Scammer wants to communicate off the site, scammer wants victim to wire money to them or open a bank account for them.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and if monies are wired, also report to the F.B.I. (FBI Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](http://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323)

**Healthcare/Health Insurance Fraud Scam:** Scammers offer free medical tests or products. They then bill Medicare/Medicaid Tip: Never sign blank insurance forms. Never give blanket authorization. Know if your physician ordered equipment.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and file a report with the Michigan Attorney General ([www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (517) 373-1110).

**Identity Theft:** Scammers obtain victim's personal information and use it to obtain goods and services or to open accounts. Tip: Shred documents that have personal information. Review your social network sites and limit personal information.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department. Remember a victim of identity theft is entitled to a police report (Michigan Statute 780.754a). Also file a report with the Federal Trade Commission [ftc.gov/idtheft](http://ftc.gov/idtheft). The Federal Trade Commission will assist with a recovery plan.

**Charity Scams:** Scammers pose as charity workers and collect money. Tip: Check the Attorney Generals website for registered charities.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and file a report with the Michigan Attorney General ([www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (517) 373-1110).

**Telemarketing Fraud:** Scammers call and offer unneeded goods or services. Items are never sent or items are substandard. Tip: Don't buy from an unfamiliar company. Don't be pressured into buying.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and file a report with the Michigan Attorney General ([www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (517) 373-1110).

**Used Car Scam:** Shady car dealer sells a overpriced used car to a buyer with distressed credit. A few days later seller contacts buyer and says financing fell through. Requests buyer for more money.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and file a report with the Michigan Attorney General ([www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (517) 373-1110).

**Computer Scam:** Scammer contacts victim and tells them that their computer is infected. Scammer offers to fix computer by remote access. Scammer obtains access and installs a virus and demands money to remove virus OR scammer obtains personal or banking information from computer files. Tip: If you have problems with your computer, take it to a local computer repair service.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and if monies are wired, also report to the F.B.I. (FBI Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](http://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323).

**Coronavirus Scam:** Scammers contact victim and claim to have a cure or testing for the Coronavirus. They request money for the cure or testing. Tip: Only obtain testing or medications from your physician.

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and if monies are wired, also report to the F.B.I. (FBI Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](http://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323).

**Vehicle warranty Scam:** Scammers call victim and offer a vehicle warranty. They obtain personal information and defraud victim (identity theft).

**Reporting:** Report violations to your local police department and if monies are wired, also report to the F.B.I. (FBI Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](http://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323).

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### **Other Reporting information**

If money is sent through the U.S. Postal Service, a report should also be filed with the United States Postal Inspectors ([postalinspectors.uspis.gov](http://postalinspectors.uspis.gov)) or contact your local Postmaster.

### **Common practices by scammers**

Scammers request/demand victims to:

- 1) Provide personal information (bank information, social security number, etc.).
- 2) Request/demand payment by wiring funds (Western Union, etc.) or by purchasing prepaid cards (iTUNES, Green dot cards, etc.).

### **Exploitation by family/caregivers (common practices)**

- Suspect obtains a power of attorney and uses victim's funds for their own benefit.
- Suspect obtains a joint bank account with the victim and deposits little or no money into the account and withdraws funds for their own benefit.
- Suspect obtains a quit claim deed for the victim's property.
- Suspect opens accounts in the victim's name.

**Common improper use of victim's funds:**

- Paying suspects cell phone/internet bills.
- Suspect purchases gas/ vehicle repairs.
- Purchase cigarettes, tobacco, vaping equipment.
- Purchase fast food/groceries for their own use.
- Use victim's funds for trips to casino, vacations.

**Reporting:** Contact your local police department and/or Adult Protective Services.

**Referral information**

- Better Business Bureau, [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) (703) 207-0100
- Federal Trade Commission, [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) (202) 326-2222
- Credit report, [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) 1-800-525-6285, 1-888-397-3742, 1-800-680-7289
- Michigan Department of Regulatory Affairs (L.A.R.A.)  
[www.michigan.gov/lara](http://www.michigan.gov/lara)
- Michigan Attorney General, [www.michigan.gov/ag](http://www.michigan.gov/ag) (517) 373-1110
- Adult Protective Services, (855) 444-3911
- United States Postal Inspectors, [www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov](http://www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov)
- United States Internal Revenue Service, [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
- F.B.I. Detroit field office, [www.detroit.fbi.gov](http://www.detroit.fbi.gov) (313) 965-2323