

SCAM ALERT: Online Dating



Arizona Attorney General
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Scam at a glance:

Social media and online dating sites make it easy for fraudsters to ingratiate themselves with victims and carry out an array of sophisticated scams ranging from wire fraud to identity theft. Con artists are just as likely to use social media to conduct scams as they are to use the telephone.

Can you tell friend from foe? Scammers have been known to create fake social media accounts and use the promise of love and companionship to trick people into sending them money.

Warning Signs:

- You meet someone online and they quickly profess strong feelings for you, and ask to chat with you privately via chat or email instead of through the dating website.
- After gaining your trust – often waiting weeks, months or even years – they tell you an elaborate story and ask for money, gifts or your bank account/credit card details.
- They don't keep their promises and always have an excuse for why they can't travel to meet you and why they always need more money.

Protect Yourself:

- Be wary of individuals you meet through social media sites, especially if they promise romance.
- Think carefully about what you post about yourself on social media. Scammers often use the public information you provide to help start a relationship with you.
- Avoid posting a front-facing picture of your full face. A con artist can copy the image and use it to create a photo ID that can be used to steal your identity.
- Check your privacy settings regularly and restrict your information so it can be viewed only by a select group.
- Don't log in to your social media accounts via a public wireless network.
- Be suspicious of unsolicited emails and requests from strangers to connect or be friends.
- Research the names and back story of people you meet online. Can you find any information that supports what they are telling you?

FIND LOVE _



Resources:

Arizona Attorney General's Office

www.azag.gov/complaints/consumer

Phoenix: (602) 542 - 5763, Tucson: (520) 628 - 6648
or Toll-free: (800) 352 - 8431

Task Force Against Senior Abuse Helpline

(602) 542 - 2124 or (844) 894 - 4735

www.azag.gov/seniors/scamalert