

Important Numbers

If you suspect you or someone you love is being financially exploited, call:

SC Department of Social Services
803-898-7318

or

Local County DSS Office or Local Law Enforcement

If you suspect exploitation in a nursing home or another health care facility, report cases to:

State Long Term Care Ombudsman
1-800-868-9095

or

SC Medicaid Fraud Control Unit
Office of the Attorney General
1-888-662-4328

If the facility is operated or contracted for operation by SC Department of Mental Health or SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, call:

SLED ~ 803-896-7654

or

Medicare Fraud ~ 1-800-447-8477

If you feel you've been the victim of a scam or know of an ongoing scam contact:

SC Department of Consumer Affairs
1-800-922-1594

NOTE: Your calls can be made **anonymously** to the SC Department of Social Services and Long Term Care Ombudsman.

10 Tips to Help Protect Your Money



- 1** Read ALL documents before you sign them. Ask questions if you don't understand them.
- 2** Use direct deposit for your checks.
- 3** Don't leave money or valuables in plain view.
- 4** Don't give out your personal, financial or health information. This includes your social security number, ATM PIN or credit card number.
- 5** Don't play a foreign lottery.
- 6** Know where an offer comes from and who you're dealing with.
- 7** Be aware of scams. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- 8** Cancel your ATM or credit card if you lose it or don't use it.
- 9** Be aware of high interest rates.
- 10** Read your bills and monthly statements closely and regularly.

PROTECT YOUR MONEY!

Protect Yourself or Someone You Love From Thefts, Scams and Fraud



SC Adult Protection Coordinating Council

in collaboration with

**AARP and
SC Department of Consumer Affairs**

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Avoid Scams & Fraud:

WATCH OUT FOR THESE POSSIBLE SCAMS

HOME REPAIR

- Do not pay in full upfront.
- Make sure all details are in a written contract.
- Check with the SC Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation at www.llr.state.sc.us to verify licensure.
- Ask friends or family for references.

HOME EQUITY FRAUD

- Never deed your property to anyone without first talking to an attorney or someone you trust.
- Refinancing incentives may not tell you about high points, fees and rate increases.
- Don't agree to a loan if you don't have enough money to make the monthly payments.

MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

- Ask for a written copy of the contract before you decide to subscribe.
- Know the cancellation policy.
- Be skeptical of "free" or prize offers. They should not come before a legitimate magazine offer.

MAIL FRAUD

- You can't win a contest or prize if you didn't enter.
- You should never have to pay to claim a prize.
- Never mail checks or cash in an unsecured mailbox such as your home mailbox.
- Shred incoming mail that you don't need.

HEALTH FRAUD

- Be aware of false ads for **free** medical services or products.
- Medicare and Medicaid will **never** call and request your personal information over the phone.
- If called, **do not** agree to enroll in health insurance plans over the phone.

SHAM INVESTMENTS

- Legitimate offers will not disappear overnight. **Do not feel pressured.**
- Involve a family member or professional when a stranger promises a large profit on an investment.

COMPUTER FRAUD

- Make sure you are on a secure website before making a purchase. Secure websites are identified by **https://** in the address bar and a padlock icon on the screen.
- Beware of e-mails from persons you don't know. Do not open attachments to e-mails unless you know who sent them.
- Be sure to have virus protection on your computer and updated regularly.

CREDIT CARD FRAUD

- Pre-approved usually means you're pre-approved to be approved: **don't be fooled!**
- Identify all annual fees, transaction fees, APR, and hidden charges upfront.
- Hold on to receipts to review charges when your bill arrives.
- Check your balance regularly for unauthorized charges.

FAKE CHARITIES

- The Secretary of State's Office has a list of good and bad charities. Call **803-734-1790** or visit www.scsos.com for a copy.
- Avoid charities soliciting door-to-door.