



COMMON FRAUDS

The following are some of the most common frauds perpetuated against seniors. They fall into some general categories of fraud.

Advance Fee Scams

Typically in an Advance Fee Scam you are offered something for FREE but you are asked to pay something first. These can include an application fee, a payout to an individual, or taxes or transfer charges etc. In fact there are so many variations of these theme that you could write an entire book on these types of scams. The scam is simple, **you pay in advance – and you don't get anything.**

Merchandise Frauds

A sub-set of the Advance Fee Scam is where products are offered to you at discounts that are “too good to be true”. Of course, typical of Advance Fee Scams you are required to pay for the products upfront and after you do the product is not what you ordered or it simply is not delivered. Many of these schemes operate out of the jurisdiction of the local Police Force and as such are difficult to investigate or legislate against.

Service Frauds

Offers to fix your credit, or find you employment, or get you a loan are often the front for another type of Advance Fee Loans. The irony is that there are also Service Frauds that offer to help you track down and get your money back from the scammers who stole your money. Well, they will do it as long as you pay a fee upfront. You know the rest of the story.

Friend in Need Scams

Can you help me? Could you do me a favour? I need your assistance? The innocence of these questions hardly begins to express the damage that has been caused by the actions that follow. Virtually all “Friend in Need” scams begin with this question or one very much like it.

The modus for this scam is simple. Under the guise of aid or assistance the perpetrator gains confidence and trust of the individual and then requests or takes money and/or valuables from them. The more insidious form of this scam is the one that is used to gain access to your house and home and any number of crimes can then be committed, including incidents that have resulted in assault, injuries and death.

The Phony Bank Inspector Fraud falls into this category. Here are some variations on a theme.

Lost Relative: An individual will pose as a relative of yours in dire straits and needing assistance in the form of money. This scam is typically done over the phone and as such it is impossible to verify the identity of the individual.

There are social agencies set up to assist people who have proper screening processes and they have access to a multitude of resources.

It’s an Emergency: There have been a number of scams perpetuated by a distraught individual with any number of fictitious emergencies. Some of these people are very convincing, but then unconvincing con artists don’t last very long in the game.

Emergencies often include a plea for a third party. “I’ve locked my keys in the car and my kids are inside”, “My wife is in labor and we don’t have money for the taxi”. Or

they might be personal, “My girlfriend, parents, husband - kicked me out of the house”, “I can’t pay my rent and Social Services is going to take my kids.”

A firm resolve to say no and to stop communication with this person is what is needed. If it is an emergency they should not hesitate having you call the police for assistance.

Report the incident to the police, some of the individuals who perpetuate these crimes will attempt to detain or restrain you. Be very careful about allowing them into your home.

“Can I borrow your phone, get a glass of water or we were in the neighborhood” Scams:

These are all friend in need methods for gaining access to your house and home. It might be used to commit a robbery, an assault or to access the layout and inventory your property for a future crime. In any event there is always a risk associated in opening your door to strangers. Companies that might legitimately need access to your house (Meter Readers, Landlords etc.) will have identification that can be verified and/or an advance notification process that makes you aware of who and why access is needed.

**Investment Frauds are another group of common frauds perpetuated against seniors and are handled in Section 3*

Name

Address

Section 2 Quiz

1. What is an advance fee scam

2. What is a friend in need scam

3. Based on this new information how are you going to change what you do now?