
Information about:

TELE FRAUD

TELEMARKETING FRAUD

It can be difficult to tell the difference between a legitimate business that uses the telephone for marketing purposes and fraudulent telemarketers who scam their victims out of identity, money and time. It is important to understand the warning signs of fraudulent telemarketers to avoid becoming a victim of this crime.

How Telemarketers Contact You*

COLD CALLS: Operators may get your number from a telephone directory, a mailing list or what fraudsters call a “sucker list.” Sucker lists contain information about people who have responded to previous telemarketing solicitations, like their name, phone number and how much money they spent. The lists are bought and sold by promoters. They are invaluable to scam artists who believe that consumers who have been deceived once are vulnerable to additional scams.

DIRECT MAIL: You may get a postcard or a letter saying you’ve won a prize or a contest. This is often a front for a scam. The instructions tell you to respond to the promoter with certain information. Should you respond, you will be contacted by someone who may use persuasive sales pitches, scare tactics and false claims to deceive you to take your money.

BROADCAST AND PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS: You may place a call in response to a television, newspaper or magazine advertisement. The fact that you initiate the call doesn’t mean the business is legitimate or that you should be less cautious about buying or investing over the phone.

*Source: Federal Trade Commission

IMMEDIATE RED FLAGS

Fraudulent telemarketers’ attempts such as: trying to convince the victim they have won a prize or contest the victim cannot remember entering, posing as a member of a charity to entice the victim to donate a sum of money or claiming to be a representative selling products ranging from lottery tickets to vacations and/or magazine subscriptions.

The following checklist should be run through before giving any telemarketer any information

- Does the offer sound too good to be true?
- Does the caller refuse to give details or mail you further information?
- Is the caller continually pressing for credit card information?
- Do you have to pay to enter a contest or win a prize?
- Is the caller using high pressure sales techniques and not allowing you to think through your decisions?

If a caller forces you to answer “yes” to any of these questions, that is a red flag warning to hang up the phone and to be sure not to give the caller any personal information.

TIPS

- Do not pay for goods and services in advance.
- Should a business name seem unfamiliar, check the legitimacy of the business with the Better Business Bureau, State Attorney General or another watchdog group.
- If you are unsure of a business transaction or investment talk to a trusted friend before going through with it.
- Before donating to a charity or making an investment, research how much of your contribution will go to the charity and how much goes toward commission payments,

RESOURCES

Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division

Santa Fe: 505-490-4060

Santa Fe and Albuquerque: 844-255-9210

www.nmag.gov/consumer-protection-1.aspx

New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department Financial Institutions Division

505-476-4885

www.rld.state.nm.us

Better Business Bureau of New Mexico

505-346-0110

www.bbb.org/local-bbb/bbb-serving-new-mexico-and-southwest-colorado

To remove your name from many national direct mail lists, write:

DMA Mail Preference Service

P.O. Box 9008

Farmingdale, NY 117-9008

www.dmachoice.org/register.php

To avoid unwanted phone calls from many national marketers, send your name address and telephone number to:

DMA Mail Preference Service

P.O. Box 9008

Farmingdale, NY 117-9008

www.dmachoice.org/register.php

National Do Not Call Registry

www.donotcall.gov