

SUMMARY

According to the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Information Website, "Crooks use clever schemes to defraud millions of people every year. They often combine new technology with old tricks to get people to send money or give out personal information." This pamphlet is designed to notify you of the common scams found in our area as well as provide some helpful tips to ensure you do not fall victim to these nefarious scammers ill intentions. This is by no means a comprehensive list.



If you have any questions, or have been the victim of an economic crime, please do not hesitate to contact the Economic Crimes Unit at 757-385-8101. Furthermore, you can report all internet scams to the FBI at <https://www.ic3.gov/>

COMMON SCAMS CONTINUED

Social Security Scam—Will call and tell you your social security number has been used/linked to serious (and often violent) crimes in Texas. They tell you the government will seize your assets and a warrant for your arrest will be issued because of this, but they will "help" you by holding your money safe while this gets worked out. They will try and convince you to put all of your money on gift cards and send them the numbers. Do not send them any money.



Two General "Rules" to Follow:

1. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is
2. You cannot pay any amount of money to get out of having a warrant for your arrest issued

CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

**VIRGINIA BEACH
POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

**ECONOMIC
CRIMES UNIT**



**COMMON
SCAM
INFORMATION**

ECU ASSISTANT

(757) 385-8101

ECU@vb.gov.com

COMMON SCAMS

Dominion Power Scam—States they will be shutting off your electricity in 24 hours if you don't pay the past-due amount immediately. Do not give them any money.

Fraudulent Check Scam—When selling something online via Craigslist, LetGo, etc., you are sent a fraudulent check for much more money than your sale price. Do not cash the check, shred it and cease contact.



Grandparents Scam—Imposter claims to be your grandchild who's gotten into an accident or come in contact with the police in a different state/country and needs you to wire money to pay their bail. Requests you don't tell their parents. Oftentimes says their nose is broken or they have a cold to explain why they sound different. Do not send them money.

IRS Scam—States you owe back taxes and are at risk of large fines or jail time if you don't settle the situation immediately. Will usually request you pay them via gift cards. Do not send them any money in any form. The IRS communicates mainly through writing.

Jamaican Lottery /Publishers Clearing House Scams—You cannot win money if you haven't signed up for the prize. Furthermore, neither the lottery nor Publisher's Clearing House requires you to pay any amount of money prior to you receiving your prize. Do not send them any money.

Jury Duty Scam—States they are a sheriff's deputy or a police officer and you have missed jury duty. Will tell you you need to pay a fine immediately or a warrant will be issued for your arrest. You cannot pay money to get out of a warrant. Do not send them any money. They oftentimes ask for gift cards as well.

Microsoft/Apple Support Scams—You get a pop up on your computer stating you to call the number provided because you have a problem or a virus. Can also be encountered when Googling Microsoft or Apple Support and you mistakenly contact a fraudulent number attached to a scammer believing it is legitimate. They will usually ask for the money on gift cards. Do not send them any money and contact a legitimate form of support to ensure the safety of your computer.



Online Job Scams—Work at home scams have a couple variations and are often listed as "personal assistant" or "shipping clerk" jobs. One will send you a fake check for your new office supplies/laptop and want you to send the money to the "vendor" and the other will have you receiving merchandise purchased with stolen credit cards and forwarding it to the scammers. Both utilize fraudulent checks and fake websites with legitimate company names. If it seems sketchy or "too good to be true" it probably is.

Online Pet Sale Scam—Utilize fake websites to sell high priced pets (pure bred dogs/cats, exotic animals, etc.) at a substantially lower price sight unseen and state they will ship the animal to you. Again, if it seems too good to be true it probably is. Do not send them any money.

Romance Scam—Will often tell you they love you in a short amount of time and then ask for money for a plane ticket to meet you or money for an emergency they've encountered. Oftentimes done through Facebook. Do not send them any money.