



CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE BULLETIN

Alert: Investment Scams

2022-12-12

FRAUD: RECOGNIZE, REJECT, REPORT

This bulletin was created to warn the public about an increase in investment scam reports. The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) has received reports from victims who have sent funds to Panama, Costa Rica, Belize and Peru. The CAFC is asking anyone who has been a victim to an investment scam to report the incident to their local police and to the CAFC. In most of these cases, victims are asked to send large amounts via wire transfers. As of September 30, 2022, victims have lost over \$109 Million via wire transfers this year.

Investment scams were the highest reported scams based on dollar loss in 2021. Victims of investment scams reported a total loss of \$163.9 Million to CAFC. In most of these cases, the investment opportunities offer higher than normal, or true monetary, returns which often result in investors losing most, or all, of their money. The scam can involve online platforms that appear professional and legitimate to track your investment. The majority of the investment scam reports involve Canadians investing after receiving a call or seeing a deceptive advertisement. In most cases, victims are not able to withdraw their funds.

Warning signs

- Investment opportunities in options or futures with higher than normal returns.
- Unsolicited telephone, email or social media investment offers.
- Displays of urgency “so you don’t miss out”.
- An individual met on a dating or social media website who quickly attempts to convince you to invest.
- Telephone calls from investment companies.
- Fraudulent ads posted on the internet or social media.
- Requests or instructions to send a wire transfer outside of the country

How to protect yourself

- If you receive a suspicious message from a trusted friend, reach out to them through a different means of communication to confirm that it is them.
- Verify if the investment companies are registered with your Provincial Securities Agency or the National Registration Search Tool (www.aretheyregistered.ca).
- Prior to investing, ask for information on the investment. Research the team behind the offering and analyze the feasibility of the project.
- Be wary of individuals met on dating sites or social media who attempt to educate and convince you to invest.
- Remember that wire transfers are difficult to reverse. Don’t send funds to an account you are not familiar with.



Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Gendarmerie royale du Canada



Competition Bureau
Canada

Bureau de la concurrence
Canada



Ontario Provincial Police

Canada

Anyone who suspects they have been the victim of cybercrime or fraud should report it to their local police and to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's [online reporting system](#) or by phone at 1-888-495-8501. If not a victim, you should still report the incident to the CAFC.