

COVID-19 Fraud and Scams:

How to Recognize, Reject and Report

March 31st, 2020

Hosted by:



Elder Abuse Prevention (ON)

Stop Abuse - Restore Respect

Prévention de la maltraitance envers les aînés (ON)

Arrêtez les mauvais traitements - Restaurez le respect

In partnership with:



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SECURITIES
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Welcome to our Webinar!

- All **attendees** will be **muted** during the webinar
- **Questions or experiencing issues** : please type in the chat box, Raeann Rideout/Laura Proctor will respond.
 - Questions and Answers - 15 mins at end of presentation
- **Evaluation** : After the session, you will be asked to complete form to provide your feedback and ideas for future webinars.
- **Speakers contact information** will be provide at the end of presentation.
- **Recording**: Webinar will be recorded and posted on EAPO's and/or partner organization's website.

Webinar Overview



- *New* **Frauds and Scams** related to COVID-19
- How to **Protect** yourself when approached by fraudsters
- Where to **Report** Frauds and Scams
- **Supports and Services** available for Victims

Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario (EAPO)

EAPO Envisions an Ontario where....

ALL seniors are free from abuse, have a strong voice, feel safe and respected.

Building that requires raising awareness, delivering education and training, working collaboratively with like-minded organizations and assisting with service co-ordination and advocacy.

- Not-for-profit, provincial charitable organization established in 2002 as ONPEA
- Funded by the ON Government, under the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA), **EAPO is mandated to support the implementation of Ontario's Strategy to Combat Elder Abuse**

“STOP ABUSE – RESTORE RESPECT”

Priorities of the Strategy

Community
Coordination &
Response

Training

Public
Awareness



Elder Abuse Prevention (ON)

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Arrêtez les mauvais traitements - Restaurez le respect

Speakers



Namita Balgi
Policy Advisor,
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Commission**



Raj Balasubramanian
Manager, Investor
Engagement and
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**Ontario Securities
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Andrea Maggisano
Senior Advisor,
Investor Office,
**Ontario Securities
Commission**

Speakers



Sergeant Laura Lee Brown
Community Services Co-ordinator
Ontario Provincial Police,
West Region Headquarters,
Ontario Provincial Police



Jeff Thomson
CAFC Fraud Prevention and
Intake Unit Manager,
Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

COVID-19 FRAUDS AND SCAMS

OSC in the Community
Presentation

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ONTARIO SECURITIES COMMISSION

- **Mandate:** provide protection to investors from unfair, improper or fraudulent practices, foster fair and efficient capital markets and confidence in capital markets, and contribute to the stability of the financial system and the reduction of systemic risk
- The Commission performs three distinct functions in support of its mandate – making policies and rules, serving as the board of directors, and adjudicating

INVESTOR OFFICE

- Leads the OSC's efforts in investor engagement, education, outreach and research
- Has a policy function and plays a key role in the oversight of the Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments (OBSI)
- Provides leadership at the OSC in the area of behavioral insights and improving the investor experience

FRAUD

- **1 in 25** Canadians say they're a victim of **investment fraud**
- **1 in 5** Canadians say they've been approached about a potential fraudulent scheme
- **Only 1 in 3 Canadians** who have been approached reported it
- Fraud is an **underreported** crime

Protecting Investors

maintaining confidence in
Canada's markets



For Immediate Release
March 19, 2020

Canadian Securities Regulators Warn Public Of Coronavirus-Related Investment Scams

Calgary – The Canadian Securities Administrators (CSA) is warning investors about companies claiming to have products or services that will prevent, detect or cure coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

Fraudsters take advantage of global events and breaking news to lure potential investors with the expectations of significant returns. A common way they do this is through pump-and-dump

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COVID-19: Town of Greater Napanee warns residents about scam phone calls

/ Napanee Today

88.7 myFM News staff

March 25, 2020 10:15 am



Bill Morneau

@Bill_Morneau

#ScamAlert: The Government is NOT sending text messages regarding the new Canada Emergency Response Benefit. If you have received a text message regarding the benefit, do not click the link.

12:23 PM · Mar 26, 2020 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

Canada's cyber spies taking down sites as battle against COVID-19 fraud begins



RCMP says fraudsters posed as PHAC and tried to scam credit card details by telling people they had COVID-19

[Catharine Tunney](#) · CBC News · Posted: Mar 23, 2020 4:00 AM ET

COVID-19: Police warn public of fraudulent financial relief scam on Facebook

about 20 hours ago By: TimminsToday Staff

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PUMP AND DUMP SCHEME

Target: Anyone with money

How it Works:

- Investors may receive an unsolicited phone call or e-mail
- Fraudsters use global events and news to promote fraudulent over-the-counter or penny stock
- As demand for the stock increases, stock price increases
- When all the stock (shares) are sold, share price plummets – shares are worthless

OTHER INVESTMENT SCAMS

- **Ponzi:** promise high returns and use new investors money to pay earlier investors
- **Affinity:** promote fraudulent opportunity to a group of people who share similar qualities, interests or beliefs
- **Offshore:** promise no tax or lower taxes and huge profits if you send money offshore
- **Pension:** promote as RRSP loan to get to your locked funds
- **Forex:** promote easy access to foreign exchange market

WARNING SIGNS OF FRAUD

- Phone call, email, text, Facebook message from someone you don't know
- High pressure sales tactic – Act now!
- Free incentives such as meal, accommodations etc.
- Promise of high return with low risk
- Encouraged to recruit friends/family
- Unregistered seller
- Tax avoidance strategy
- Company about to be listed on an exchange

DO A BACKGROUND CHECK



Think you can spot investment fraud?

It's never this easy.

Always check the registration of any person or business trying to sell you an investment or give you investment advice. Registration helps protect you from unqualified or fraudulent individuals.

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- Registration helps protect you from unqualified or fraudulent individuals.

PROTECT YOUR MONEY

- **Be skeptical:** Question unsolicited investment opportunities over the phone, online or from acquaintances
- **Get a second opinion:** Before you invest, consider asking a registered qualified advisor, a lawyer or an accountant
- **Take the time you need:** Be suspicious of time-limited offers and high-pressure tactics. If the investment is legitimate, you should not have to invest on the spot
- **Do your homework:** Before you make any investment, understand how it works, the risks and any fees

Contact the OSC: We're here to help.

1-877-785-1555

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REPORT FRAUD

Ontario Securities Commission

Toll free: 1-877-785-1555

TTY: 1-866-827-1295

Email: inquiries@osc.gov.on.ca

Your local police

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

1-888-495-8501

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OSC INVESTOR EDUCATION RESOURCES



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GetSmarterAboutMoney.ca

The screenshot shows the website's header with the OSC logo, navigation menu, and search bar. Below the search bar are three featured articles: 'Investing basics', 'Planning your future', and 'COVID-19 and your money'. A section titled 'SIMPLIFY YOUR CALCULATIONS' features a carousel of calculator tools, including Compound Interest, Spending Habits, Emergency Fund, Retirement Cash Flow, Education Cost, and RRIF Withdrawal calculators.

OSC ONTARIO SECURITIES COMMISSION

Get Smarter About Money.ca

A.A. | Contrast | Français

Invest Plan & manage Life events Protect your money Calculators & tools Resources

I am looking for...

Investing basics

Planning your future

COVID-19 and your money

SIMPLIFY YOUR CALCULATIONS
CALCULATORS

Compound Interest Calculator

New Spending Habits Calculator

New Emergency Fund Calculator

New Retirement Cash Flow Calculator

New Education Cost Calculator

RRIF Withdrawal Calculator

COVID-19 AND YOUR MONEY

The screenshot shows the top of the OSC website. The header includes the OSC logo (Ontario Securities Commission) and the 'Get Smarter About Money' logo. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are visible, along with accessibility options for font size (A A), contrast, and language (Français). A navigation menu contains links for 'Invest', 'Plan & manage', 'Life events', 'Protect your money', 'Calculators & tools', and 'Resources'. A search bar is present with the placeholder text 'I am looking for...'. The main banner features a background image of hands being held together, with the text 'COVID-19 and your money'. Below the banner are three article thumbnails: 'The COVID-19 outbreak and your investments' (with an image of a person in a lab coat), 'How are my investments protected?' (with an image of people with umbrellas), and 'COVID-19: Important financial dates and information' (with an image of a calendar).

[COVID-19 Scams, Pump and Dump](#)

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STAY CONNECTED WITH THE OSC



Sign up for **Investor News** on [GetSmarterAboutMoney.ca](https://www.getsmarteraboutmoney.ca)

- Enewsletter that covers timely topics, resources, investor warnings and much more

Follow us on:

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Coronavirus-related Investment Scams

The Canadian Securities Administrators (CSA) is **warning investors** about companies claiming to have products or services that will prevent, detect or cure coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

Fraudsters take advantage of global events and breaking news to lure potential investors with the expectations of significant returns. A common way they do this is through pump-and-dump schemes involving publicly traded small "shell" companies. [Read more](#)



Managing Financial Health in Challenging Times

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada has a **new webpage** about managing your financial health. It has important information about maintaining an emergency fund and your options if you're facing financial hardship. [Read more](#)

PROTECTING OLDER ADULTS AND VULNERABLE SENIORS

Proposed changes to tackle financial exploitation and diminished mental capacity of older and vulnerable clients

- **Trusted contact person:** The proposed amendments will require registrants to take reasonable steps to obtain the name and contact information of a trusted contact person (TCP), as well as the client's written consent to contact the TCP in specified circumstances.
- **Temporary holds:** The proposed amendments set out the steps that a registered firm must take if they place a temporary hold on a transaction due to a reasonable belief that a vulnerable client is being financial exploited, or that a client lacks mental capacity.

[News release -- Canadian securities regulators propose changes to tackle financial exploitation and diminished mental capacity of older and vulnerable clients](#)

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Ontario Securities Commission

20 Queen St. W., 22nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5H 3S8

Tel: 1-877-785-1555 **Email:** inquiries@osc.gov.on.ca

 **GetSmarterAboutMoney**  **@smarter_money**

[Visit InvestorOffice.ca](http://InvestorOffice.ca)





COVID-19 Scams and Frauds

Jeff Thomson

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre / Le centre antifraude du Canada

Royal Canadian Mounted Police / Gendarmerie royale du Canada



What is the CAFC?



Competition Bureau
Canada

Bureau de la concurrence
Canada



What We Do

**Centralised
Reporting
and Intake**

**Operational
Intelligence
Support**

**Prevention
&
Awareness**

**Disruption
Disruption**

Disruption



Mass Marketing Fraud (MMF)

What is MMF?

Fraud or deception on mass, committed over communication media, namely: telephone, mail and Internet.

Who is doing it?

It is mainly organized crime – it is done over boundaries to impede / elude law enforcement

What can you do about it?

FRAUD...Recognize...Reject...Report



MMF Schemes

- 900 Scams
- Advanced Fee Letter Fraud (419 / Nigerian Letters)
- Advanced Fee Loans
- Anti-Virus Scam
- Bomb Threat
- Buying and Selling online
- Cheque Overpayment Fraud
- Counterfeit
- Dead Air Calls
- Emergency Scam
- Extortion
- False Charities
- Hitman Email
- Identity Theft
- Inheritance
- Job
- Lottery Emails
- Lower your interest rates
- Money Mule
- Office Supplies / Directory
- Overpayment scam
- Phishing
- Phone Number Spoofing
- Prize Pitch
- Puppy Scam
- Pyramid Schemes
- Recovery Pitch
- Romance Scam
- Service Scam
- Travel
- Vacation
- Vehicle Warranty Package
- Ransomware -
CryptoLocker



2019 Overall Reporting

In 2019, the CAFC received:

- 400,000 calls;
- 69,000 online reports.

Totaling
\$130 million in reported dollar loss





Covid-19 / Coronavirus Frauds

- **Cleaning or heating companies**
 - Offering duct cleaning services or air filters to protect from COVID-19
- **Local and provincial hydro/electrical power companies**
 - Threatening to disconnect your power for non-payment



Covid-19 / Coronavirus Frauds

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the World Health Organization**
 - Offering fake lists for sale of COVID-19 infected people in your neighbourhood
- **Public Health Agency of Canada**
 - Giving false results saying you have been tested positive for COVID-19
 - Tricking you into confirming your health card and credit card numbers for a prescription



Covid-19 / Coronavirus Frauds

- **Red Cross** and other known charities ◦ offering free medical products (e.g. masks) for a donation
- **Government Departments**
 - Sending out coronavirus-themed phishing emails
 - Tricking you into opening malicious attachments
 - Tricking you to reveal sensitive personal and financial details



Covid-19 / Coronavirus Frauds

- **Private Companies**

- Offering fast COVID-19 tests for sale

Remember:

- Only health care providers can perform the tests
- No other tests are genuine or guaranteed to provide accurate results



2019 Top 10 Scams {Complaints}

Fraud Type	Reports	Victims	Dollar Loss
Extortion	10,278	2,101	\$9.2 million
Personal Info	7,642	5,262	
Phishing	5,053	1,384	
Service	3,547	1,779	\$7.2 million
Merchandise	2,452	1,759	\$2.6 million
Sale of merchandise	2,211	1,526	\$2.7 million
Job	1,702	682	\$2.2 million
Prize	1,200	318	\$3.4 million
Bank Investigator	1,083	366	\$3.2 million
Romance	975	682	\$18.3 million



How To Protect Yourself

Individuals

- Don't be afraid to say no
- Do your research
- Don't give out personal information
- Beware of upfront fees
- Beware of unsolicited emails – don't click on links or open attachments if you
- Protect your computer



How To Protect Yourself

Businesses

- Know who you're dealing with
- Beware of unsolicited emails – don't click on links or open attachments if you
- Limit your employees' authority
- Watch for anomalies



What To Do if You're a Victim

Step 1: Gather all information pertaining to the fraud. This includes documents, receipts, copies of emails and/or text messages.

Step 2: Report the incident to your local law enforcement. This ensures that your Police of jurisdiction are aware of what scams are targeting their residents and businesses. Keep a log of all calls and document your file or occurrence numbers.

Step 3: Contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre toll free at 1-888-495-8501 or through the [Fraud Reporting System](#) (FRS) found on our website.



What To Do if You're a Victim

Step 4: Report the incident to the Financial Institution where the money was sent. (e.g, Money Service Business such as Western Union or MoneyGram, Bank or Credit Union, Credit Card Company or Internet Payment Service Provider).

Step 5: If the fraud took place online through Facebook, eBay, a classified ad such as Kijiji or a dating website, be sure to report the incident directly to the website. This is often found under “Report Abuse” or “Report an Ad”.

Step 6: Victims of ID Fraud should place flags on all their accounts and report to both Credit Bureau's, [Equifax](#) and [TransUnion](#).



How to Report Fraud

**Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre/
Le centre antifraude du Canada**

Online – Fraud Reporting System (FRS)
(www.antifraudcentre.ca)



ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE

**PROTECTING OURSELVES,
STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES...**

It's a different world...

- Provincial State of Emergency declared (17Mar20).
- Non-essential businesses are closed.
- Gatherings can not be larger than 5 people (EMCPA regulation).
- Members of the public are asked to remain in their residences, leaving only for essentials.



More time indoors often means more time spent online or answering the phone...

- Individuals of all ages are spending significant periods of time in their residences...and on the internet.
- An enhanced level of caution should be used.



What's happening?

- It's all about the money.
- CRIMINALS are using the COVID-19 pandemic as a new way to frighten our communities.
- Thieves are preying upon (and capitalizing on) those fears.
- Purposely seeking out vulnerable individuals.
- Commonly using pressure tactics.



And it goes unreported...

95%

OF VICTIMS **DON'T** REPORT FRAUD

#ReportFraud FRAUD... RECOGNIZE IT... **REPORT IT...** STOP IT. www.opp.ca

The infographic features a large red '95%' on the left. To its right is a grid of 20 groups of five stylized human figures, representing 100% of victims. The first 19 groups are white, and the last group on the far right is red, visually representing the 95% statistic.



Why report?

- Using your computer to report online is an important way to assist law enforcement and fraud prevention partners to track the types of crimes occurring in our communities.
- These attempts should be reported to CAFC and are shared with police.
- Whether you have sustained a loss or not, **REPORT!**



Why report?

- Just because the criminals weren't successful with you, doesn't mean that a crime wasn't intended. Next time, they may be successful with scamming your neighbour.



If you have sustained a loss, we want to know...

- Where there are “attempts”, there are “actuals”.
- Call us using our non-emergency number 1-888-310-1122.
- All reports are received by a police officer.



How does COVID-19 affect OPP response?

- Public and officer safety are our priorities.
- If your matter can be handled over the phone, it will be.
- If you require a police officer to attend, you will be asked screening questions.
- The officer(s) will maintain physical distancing and utilize PPE when required.
- If you need us, we will be there.



Report it!

- Your report is NOT a bother, and we're never too busy to hear from you. We never close and our online reporting is ALWAYS available.
- “But nothing happened”...or, “it wasn't a large amount”. Doesn't matter. CAFC for attempts, police for actual losses.
- No amount of victimization is an acceptable amount.



Who can become a victim?

- ANYONE
- ANY age
- ANY time
- ANY place

**Victims are NOT fools;
scammers are PROFESSIONALS.**



Sadly, not all losses are recovered...

- In Ontario alone, losses are estimated to be in the billions of dollars per year.
- Sophisticated criminals are always trying to find ways to acquire new victims.
- Anonymity of screens and telephones makes identification extremely difficult and at times, impossible.
- Many victims trusted the voice on the line or the instructions they received on their computer became victims



What can YOU do to prevent fraud?

This unprecedented time is an OPPORTUNITY for each of us to educate ourselves, to watch out for one another and to collectively stop this behaviour in its tracks by following these steps...

EVERY TIME!



What can we do to stay safe?

- STOP the clock...
- Say NO...
- Do some RESEARCH...
- THEN decide whether to proceed.
- REPORT the attempt!



Most of us are conditioned to be respectful...

- We are POLITE...that's generally a good thing!
- Telephone calls can be especially difficult...as the voice on the line can sound extremely convincing.
- Quotes exist for a reason; if there is a product or service that you do not have experience with, **GET A SECOND OPINION** before you say yes.



How we can help...

- Front-line officers in all detachments are assigned to fraud reports.
- When required, Crime Unit members will become engaged.
- Depending on the severity or type of fraud, the Serious Fraud Office, Anti-Rackets Branch, or Cybercrimes Investigation Unit may become involved.
- We investigate ALL occurrences thoroughly.



How else can we help?

- We regularly work closely with community partners and provide support to many community projects.
- We provide public education and online resources in every community.
- Visit www.opp.ca to access resources including our Resource Guide to Living Well...Aging Well.



Sir Robert Peel said it best...

“The police are the public, and the public are the police.”

LET’S WORK TOGETHER!



THANK YOU AND STAY SAFE!

Ontario Provincial Police

1-888-310-1122



In Case of Emergency call

911



Provincial Information and Support

Reporting to Police

Call your local Police Service

RCMP

www.rcmp.gc.ca

Ontario Provincial Police

www.opp.ca

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/index-eng.htm

Senior Crime Stoppers

<http://ontariocrimestoppers.ca>

1-800-222-TIPS (8477)

Provincial Information, Resources and Supports

Better Business Bureau

613-237-4856

ottawa.bbb.org

Ministry of Consumer Services

1-877-665-0662

sse.gov.on.ca

Financial Consumer Agency of Canada

1-866-461-FCAC (3222)

Provincial Information, Resources and Supports

Canadian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse

www.cnpea.ca

CanAge

www.canage.ca

National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly

www.nicenet.ca/

International Federation on Aging

<https://ifa.ngo/>

Stop Family Violence

www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence.html

Stay in touch with us!



[@elderabuseONT](https://twitter.com/elderabuseONT)



www.facebook.com/Elderabuseontario



linkedin.com/in/elder-abuse-ontario/

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COMMUNITY
SAFETY SERVICES
Ontario Provincial Police

Jeff Thomson

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre / Le centre
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Royal Canadian Mounted Police /
Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Dir/Tl: (705) 494-3630



Contact Information

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20 Queen St. W., 22nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5H 3S8

Tel: 1-877-785-1555 **Email:** inquiries@osc.gov.on.ca

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Questions

