



Imposter Scam

The Imposter scam is when someone pretends to be someone you know, a company or government agency to establish credibility and gain your trust. They trick or scare you into giving them your personal information, money or both. Here are some tips to avoid falling victim.

1. The most common types of Imposter scams are claiming you've won a prize or a "free" trip, saying they are the police, IRS or tech support calling about an issue with your computer. They might pretend to be from someone you know, like your grandchild, relative or friend. Or maybe it's from someone you feel like you know, but have only met online. They may contact you by telephone, mail, or email.
2. Don't be fooled. Law enforcement and government agencies don't call people demanding payment. If you think it may be a legitimate company, hang-up and contact the company with a telephone number or email address you have for them; not one the caller gave you.
3. Never give out your personal or financial information to anyone, unless you know who you are dealing with, why they are requesting the information and how the information will be used.
4. The scammers' goal is to get you to send them money. They often do this by requesting you wire them the money or put the money on a prepaid card. This is a red flag that it's a scam.
5. Don't trust caller ID. Technology has made it easier for scammers. They can mask or "spoof" your caller ID, so it may appear as an "unknown number," from a local or U.S. area code. They can have the display show the name of your local police department, or even your own name and telephone number.
6. Have you ever picked up the phone, but no one was on the line? That's referred to as "Robocalls" thousands of phone numbers can be dialed at the same time, to increase their chances of scamming someone. Just hang-up.
7. If you didn't enter a sweepstakes or lottery, then you can't have won. Remember that it's illegal to play a foreign lottery through the mail or over the phone.
8. Don't pay for a prize. If you win a legitimate sweepstakes, you don't have to pay insurance, taxes, or shipping charges to collect your prize. If you have to pay, it's not a prize.
9. Remember the purpose of the Do Not Call List is to reduce the number of telemarketing calls. It won't stop scammers from calling you.
10. Be Skeptical of unsolicited calls you receive out of the blue. If you don't know who is calling, don't answer. If they leave a message, but you don't know the caller or company, don't return the call. You may incur high rate charges, even if it appears to be a toll free number.