



State Attorney 18th Judicial Circuit

Brevard and Seminole County



The Monthly Brief

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FRAUD TOP 5 TIPS

- Spot imitators.** Scammers often pretend to be someone you trust, like a government official, a family member, a charity, or a company you do business with. Beware an unexpected request whether it comes as a text, a phone call, or an email.
- Do online searches.** Type a company or product name into your favorite search engine with words like "review," "complaint" or "scam." You can even search for phone numbers to see if other people have reported them as scams.
- Don't believe caller ID** Technology makes it easy for scammers to fake caller ID information, so the name and number you see aren't always real, including local area codes.
- Hang up on Robocalls.** If you hear a recorded pitch, hang up and report it to the FTC. Don't press 1 to speak to a person or to be taken off the list. That could lead to more calls.
- Don't pay in advance** for debt relief, credit & loan offers, or a job. If you've won a prize, but first you have to pay taxes or fees say NO. If you do, they will probably take the money and disappear.

In Part By Federal Trade Commission

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Subscribe: philarcher@sa18.org

AARP FRAUD WATCH NETWORK

Identity theft, investment fraud and scams rob millions of Americans of their hard-earned money. Last year, 13 million people were victims of identity theft alone—that's one person every 2 seconds.

The AARP Fraud Watch Network offers things like Email Alerts, a Scam-Tracking Map featuring warnings from law enforcement and people in your state, The Con Artists Playbook—interviews with con artists who reveal their secrets, and a phone number (**877-908-3360**) you can call to talk to volunteers trained in how to spot and report fraud. You can find all this and more on the AARP website at:

AARP.org/FraudWatchNetwork

CONSUMER ALERT - FAKE GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Launched in 2016 this fake Phil Archer Facebook page continues to scam people by offering phony government grants.

The offer comes from a trusted friend on Facebook confirming they got money and how to contact the crooks. Once in touch they give you only a few hours to apply and then ask for application fees to be sent via Western Union. Money never seen again.



Sadly this site and many others posing as government agencies continue to operate and have stolen thousands of dollars, often from disadvantaged people seeking help. Here are some tips to remember;

- Government Grants are difficult to obtain, don't solicit you on social media and don't ask for money to be sent via wire transfer.
- Do an internet search of the both the offer and the government agency. Chances are you're not the first person targeted and scam alerts will likely show up.
- Fake pages often lack detail, display incorrect information and have few posts or interaction. Find a phone number online and call the agency, chances are they have heard about the scam or can tell you if the program is real.