

## Protecting Your Home from Property Fraud: A Free Tool Worth Using

Dear Reader,

A good friend and fine realtor, Karen Lieff of Coldwell Banker Global Luxury, recently raised an important issue: **property fraud** in the context of dealing with a decedent's real estate during the probate process.

Massachusetts registries of deeds have developed a **Consumer Notification Service** to help combat property and mortgage fraud related to real estate ownership. Although not every registry offers it, if you live in a county that does, it is well worth taking advantage of this free service.

Why does this matter? According to the FBI, property and mortgage fraud are **among the fastest-growing white-collar crimes in the United States**. In many cases, criminals record fraudulent documents that make it appear as though they own your property.

Not every county offers this service, but **Norfolk County is a leader** in providing a FREE Consumer Notification Service. The Norfolk system allows property owners to receive alerts whenever a document is recorded under their name.

### Here's how it works:

1. Sign up using the link below.
2. A temporary password will be emailed to you.
3. Log in and create a new, unique password.
4. Enter up to two names (individual or business) and the city or town to monitor.
5. You will receive an email alert if any document is recorded under those names.

### Important notes:

- Alerts are **name-based**, not address-based, so you may receive alerts related to someone with the same name.
- Ongoing updates to older records (from the 1990s and earlier) may trigger alerts as indexing continues to improve.

### For Norfolk County, sign up here:

<https://www.norfolkdeeds.org/services/consumer-notification-service>

### Other Massachusetts registries that may offer a similar service include:

- Barnstable Registry of Deeds
- Berkshire Middle Registry of Deeds
- Berkshire South Registry of Deeds
- Dukes County Registry of Deeds
- Franklin County Registry of Deeds
- Hampshire Registry of Deeds
- Middlesex North Registry of Deeds
- Middlesex South Registry of Deeds

- Nantucket Registry of Deeds
- Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds
- Suffolk Registry of Deeds
- Worcester Registry of Deeds

In addition, Massachusetts allows residential property owners to register **up to three residential properties** and receive email alerts when documents are recorded. You can sign up for that statewide service here: <https://cns.masslandrecords.com>

I was genuinely excited to learn about the Norfolk County system—and potentially others—as a practical way to help protect clients from the devastating experience of losing their home to fraud.

Warm regards,  
**Susana**