

Be cyber secure: protect against romance/confidence scams



Romance/confidence scams are used to target individuals who are online dating and/or active on social media. Cyber criminals will create a fake online identity to try to establish a trusting, caring, and believable relationship. Once the relationship is established, the cyber criminal will deploy different methods to ask for money. Some cyber criminals will go as far as to propose marriage. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.

→ Cyber criminals will utilize some of the following methods to trick people:

- **Requesting assistance with fake legal and/or medical fees** that prohibit the cyber criminal from visiting and/or maintaining communication.
- **Proposing fake investment opportunities.** A popular investment scam, called “pig butchering,” may occur after a friendship or romantic bond has been established and the victim is urged to invest in a fraudulent website.
- **Impersonating a loved one.** The cyber criminal will pose as one of their target’s loved ones. The cyber criminal that is impersonating the loved one acts as if they are in distress, and needs money immediately to get out of trouble.

→ Be proactive:

- **Be careful** when posting personally identifiable information on social media. Enable security settings on your social media profiles to limit what you share publicly
- **Never send money** to anyone whose identity you cannot independently verify.
- **Research who you are talking to.** See if the image, name and details have been used elsewhere.
- **Don’t fall for the bait.** If the individual sounds too good to be true, they probably are.
- **Be wary** of unknown individuals. Do not give financial information or send sensitive information that can later be used to extort you.

→ If you suspect you have been targeted:

- **Don’t delay.** Acting quickly after you have been targeted can minimize damage.
- **Call your bank** and freeze financial accounts that may be affected and inform credit bureaus
- **Change all passwords** that may have been compromised.
- **Call the police** and file reports with the relevant local authorities.
- **Notify the company** on whose platform the threat originated.
- **Document everything** about the event. The more information you have, the better armed you will be to assist an investigation, and the better prepared you will be against future cyber crime attempts.

Visit www.bankofamerica.com/security to learn how to help protect yourself and your business.

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