

Scammers target seniors because they tend to be trusting, polite, They believe they have a significant amount of in their accounts, and own their home, and have good credit. The FBI estimates that seniors lose more than \$3 billion each year to fraudsters often leaving them in a very vulnerable position with little time to recoup their losses. With the elderly population growing, elder fraud will continue to be a growing problem. Most of these scams go unreported because the senior is ashamed and scared to tell anyone, especially family members because sadly, over 90% of all reported elder abuse is committed by their own family members.

### **1. Government impostor scams**

Imposters call pretending to be from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Social Security Administration, or Medicare. They may say you are going to lose your Social Security or Medicare benefits if you don't provide certain personal information. They often "spoof" the actual phone numbers of the government agency they say they are calling from.

### **2. The grandparent scam**

Scammers call an older person and say "Hi Grandma, do you know who this is?" The fake grandchild will ask for money for a financial problem (overdue rent, car repairs, jail bond) and begs the grandparent not to tell anyone. Payment is usually made via gift card and the victim will most likely never see that money again.

### **3. Medicare/health insurance scams**

In these types of scams, scammers state they are with Medicare and get older people to give their personal information (Medicare #, date of birth); sometimes scammers offer a product or service for FREE, stating Medicare will pay 100%, such as a New Medicare card, genetic testing and COVID-19 vaccines.

### **4. Computer tech support scams**

These scams prey on people's lack of knowledge about computers. A pop-up message or blank screen usually appears on a computer or phone, telling you that your device is compromised and needs fixing. When you call the support number for help, the scammer may either request remote access to your computer and/or request payment to have it repaired.

### **5. Sweepstakes & lottery scams**

The scammer states you have won a lottery or sweepstakes and requests a small payment for fees and taxes to get the rest of the winnings. Sometimes a check is sent for you to deposit into your account, and while it shows up in your account immediately, in a few days the (fake) check will bounce.

### **6. Robocalls/phone scams**

One popular robocall is the "Can you hear me?" call, where the senior answers "yes," and the scammer records their voice, thus obtaining authorization to use stolen credit cards or to bill Medicare for unwanted items or services.

### **7. Romance scams**

Con artists find their victims on internet dating sites using fake profiles and usually pretend to be working overseas. They request money to pay for visas, medical emergencies, and travel expenses to come visit.

### **8. Internet and email fraud**

Unfamiliarity of browsing the web makes seniors especially susceptible to being fooled into believing a phishing email is from a company they know; downloading a fake anti-virus program or an actual virus that will open up the computer to scammers; and give them access to your personal information.

### **9. Elder financial abuse**

Usually carried out by a trusted individual like a family member, friend, Power of Attorney, or caregiver, who try and gain control of a senior's money, assets, and credit. Seniors who have a disability or cognitive impairment (such as dementia) may be at particular risk.

### **10. Charity scams**

These scam often capitalize on current events (natural disasters), and scammers may insist you donate immediately, via gift cards or money transfer.

**REPORT all scams to the Arkansas SMP—866-726-2916 / [www.ar.gov/SMP](http://www.ar.gov/SMP)**