

Dating and Romance Scams



Despite the many legitimate dating websites operating in Canada, there are many dating and romance scams as well. Dating and romance scams try to lower your defenses by appealing to your romantic and compassionate side.

What to Look For:

Some **dating and romance** scams work by setting up a dating website where you pay for each email or message you send and receive. The scammer will try to hook you in by continuing to send you vague-sounding emails filled with talk of love or desire. The scammer might also send emails filled with details of their home country or town that do not refer to you much at all. These are attempts to keep you writing back and paying money for use of the scammer's dating website.

Even on a legitimate dating site, you might be approached by a scammer—perhaps someone who claims to have a very sick family member or who is in the depths of despair (often these scammers claim to be from Russia or Eastern Europe). After they have sent you a few messages, and maybe even a glamorous photo, you will be asked (directly or more subtly) to send them money to help their situation. Some scammers even arrange to meet with you, in the hope that you give them presents or money—and then they disappear.

In other cases, scammers will try to build a friendship with you, perhaps even sending you flowers or other small gifts. After building a relationship, the scammer will tell you about a large amount of money they need to transfer out of their country, or that they want to share with you. They will then ask for your banking details or money for an administrative fee or tax that they claim needs to be paid to free up the money.

Protect Yourself!

Remember

- ✓ Check website addresses carefully. Scammers often set up fake websites with very similar addresses to legitimate dating websites.

Caution

- ✓ Never send money, or give credit card or online account details to anyone you do not know and trust.

Think

- ✓ Don't give out any personal information in an email or when you are chatting online.

Investigate

- ✓ Make sure you only use legitimate and reputable dating websites. Verify, Verify, Verify. If in doubt...call the CAFC.

Ask yourself

- ✓ Would someone I have never met really declare their love for me after only a few letters or emails?

Are you a victim? If you suspect that you may be a target of fraud, or if you have already sent funds, don't be embarrassed - you're not alone. **Report to your local Police and the CAFC.**

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC): www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca, or call: 1-888-495-8501 (Mon. - Fri. 9am to 4:30pm EST)