



# Dating App & Romance Scams

## Community Protection Division

### Boulder County District Attorney's Office

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## Dating App Scams and Romance Scams

**What is it?** When someone creates a fake identity to gain a victim's affection and trust in order to create the illusion of a loving relationship which they then use to manipulate or steal from the victim.



## Telltale Signs that a Person is a Scammer

- Lures you off the original dating site and moves the conversation to phone calls or through social media messaging
- Claims to be a U.S. citizen, but they currently work overseas or in the military
- Professes love quickly
- They don't share information about themselves or the information shared is contradictory (e.g. they say they are college educated, but their grammar is poor)
- Exchanges photos early on, sometimes explicit in nature
- If explicit photos are shared, they immediately request the same types of photos from you
- Their online profile may have little or generic information about themselves
- Has a loved one that is sick or some other kind of tragic event in their life
- Requests money for that sick person or for the tragic event
- Tells you that they want to visit you, but they don't have the ability to pay for a plane ticket
- They send you a check and ask you to deposit it and send money to another bank account
- They send you packages that they want you to send elsewhere



## How to Prevent Becoming a Victim

- ✓ Be cautious of anyone who professes their love too quickly
- ✓ Do a reverse image search to find out if photos used on a person's online profile are commonly used elsewhere
- ✓ Do a background check on the individual
- ✓ Remember, that when you send photos, you cannot take them back
- ✓ Do not share personal identifying information (middle name, SSN, Medicare number, addresses, phone numbers, etc.)
- ✓ Use trusted dating sites and do not take communication "offline" to other social media messaging
- ✓ Think twice about using your web cam
- ✓ Do not download anything to your computer, tablet, or phone
- ✓ Don't send money or provide bank information
- ✓ Trust your gut and go with your instincts. If someone is too good to be true, talk to someone about it

**See other side for reporting, recovering, and how to help a friend in this situation**



**Questions or Concerns?**  
**Community Protection**  
**Division**  
**303-441-3700**



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# Recovery from Dating App & Romance Scams and How to Help a Friend

## Community Protection Division Boulder County District Attorney's Office



### How to Report and Recover from a Dating App & Romance Scam

**Talk to Someone.** The impact of being a victim of a romance scam can be profound. It is highly encouraged to reach out for help. If you don't know who to contact, call the Community Protection Division at 303-441-3700.

#### Report the Scammer

- ✓ Report the scammer to the dating site
- ✓ Contact your local law enforcement agency to report the scammer
- ✓ Report the scam to the Federal Trade Commission <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/> or call the FTC at 877-382-4357
- ✓ Report the scam to the FBI online at <https://www.ic3.gov/>

#### Hang Up on the Scammer

- ✓ Disconnect from the scammer by blocking their number and dating site profile
- ✓ If needed, obtain a new phone number

#### If You Lost Money in the Scam

- ✓ If you paid by gift card, immediately call the gift card company to report the scam and tell them you paid a scammer with a gift card and ask if it possible to get a refund.
- ✓ If you wired or transferred bank or credit card information, contact your bank or credit card company and tell them you have shared your bank information with a scammer.

**Apps or Programs Downloaded.** Delete any applications or programs that were downloaded to your computer/laptop, tablet, or phone



### How to Help a Friend

- Be a friend and listen to their situation
- Try not to immediately jump to telling the person that their situation is scam. To your friend the situation may feel like a full fledged relationship
- If your friend is experiencing a scam begin gathering information:
  - How they met the person?
  - Name of their love interest?
  - Where does love interest work?
  - How they are communicating with each other (phone, text messages, etc.)?
  - Have they met in person?
  - Has your friend provided any money to their love interest?
  - Has their love interest sent photos to them?
  - Has your friend sent photos back to their love interest?
- If the person is losing money, ask them how they intend on supporting their rent, groceries, medical needs if they no longer have money
- If the love interest is alienating your friend from others, make sure to increase natural supports (friends, family, clergy, etc.) so they are not pulling away from those who care for them
- Connect the individual to appropriate recovery agencies, which can include the Community Protection Division at 303-441-3700.



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