

FRAUD ALERT

from the Jefferson / Gilpin Counties'
District Attorney's Office



Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

Independence Day. Freedom. When we say the word, it almost always connotes a pleasant, satisfying, and beneficial thought. It's the way we live as Americans. It's the open avenue to pursuing life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

There are some negative connotations to freedom. One of those is that older adults who have their full mental capacity have the right to make a bad choice. You can look at them and say, "You're making a choice that will have a negative impact on your life." They can look back at you and respond, "I know. But I don't care, it's what I wanna' do."

As it true with so many things, crooks/swindlers/exploiters know that older adults have this freedom and utilize it to the fullest. Many times this knowledge is used in a 'romance' scam, but sometimes crooks just make a sorry case for how needy they are; they're looking for someone with a caring heart to give them a new start. It may start with a small request and can grow from there like a dry sponge absorbing water.

All of us must be preemptive with older loved ones and friends. When fraudsters enter the life of an older adult, they flatter them, speak loving and caring thoughts, show feigned interest, and spend time with them. Once trust is solidified, the crook convinces the older adult that everything about their relationship must remain *secret* and *confidential*, even with family and closest friends. Many times the fraudster will make an argument for the fact that they are the only genuine friend of the older adult. They may denigrate family and present the case that they only want their loved one's money.

Typically these schemes must be caught early. If the older adult develops feelings for the crook, if they feel like they're helping someone in need, or if their thoughts turn negative toward their family, it will be more difficult to dissuade them from giving money.

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Behavior to watch for:

The older adult may become secretive, especially about who they are talking to and their daily activity schedule; they may isolate more.

There may be physical changes. These may seem positive – like new and younger looking clothing or a new hairstyle. These may be negative – like loss of weight and a more unkempt appearance than is normal.

There may be new friends. These friends may be 'in person' or via the internet.



Jefferson / Gilpin Counties' District Attorney's Office
District Attorney Alexis King

for questions or concerns, please call
FRAUD HOTLINE: 303-271-6980



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Life...and the Pursuit of Happiness

To catch a scam early on, and have a better chance to end it, one must develop a wary eye toward older loved ones. In addition to the behaviors noted on page one, you might also notice an older adult suddenly having financial issues. Or there may be new friends in the picture – either online or in person.

If there seems to be reason for concern that an older adult has fallen victim to a scam, whether that be a family member or a friend, here are some things to try:

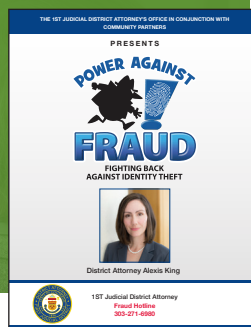
- **Talk to** the older adult about new friends in their life and what kind of activity they've been involved in online.
- **Ask if** they are familiar with scams that target older adults and what they're doing, on a regular basis, to protect themselves.
- **If there** seem to be genuine concerns and evidence of red flags, call Adult Protective Services and ask if they would do a welfare check.
- **If you** are a family member, talk to their closest friends and ask if there are new acquaintances in their life or if they have been ignoring their long-term friends. If you are a friend, call a family member and share your concerns.
- **If possible**, talk to their attorney to share your concerns. You can ask if changes have been made to legal documents, such as a power-of-attorney or will.
- **Expect resistance** but be persistent.

Join us for a
free TRIAD lunch
on Tuesday, July 27
TO LEARN
MORE!

The District Attorney's TRIAD Senior Safety Program will hold our first in-person meeting in 14 months at 1:30pm on Tuesday, July 27. It will be a free BBQ lunch. All are invited, but an RSVP would be appreciated: csjohnso@jeffco.us. The location is the District Attorney's Office. There is no cost.

If you're ready to schedule a crime prevention seminar for your group (retirement community, faith community, service organization, etc.), please contact Cary Johnson at 303-271-6970 or csjohnso@jeffco.us

We have a number of different presentations and handouts, time for Q&A, and can address specific needs.



ALERT:

If you sent a MoneyGram transfer to a scammer in 2013-2017 and used your name on the transfer, you may be entitled to some restitution from the FTC.

The deadline to file a claim is August 31, 2021. You can file online at or print the claim form at moneygramremission.com. If you mail a claim, you will need your MoneyGram receipts, claim forms, and transaction history reports.



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