

2022

## BBB Scam Tracker<sup>SM</sup> RISK REPORT



# Highlights

### TOP 5 RISKIEST SCAMS REPORTED BY CONSUMERS

**1 ONLINE PURCHASE**  
Scammers offer attractive online deals but, once the payment is made, no product or service is delivered. In some cases, fraudsters send low-quality or counterfeit products.



**31.9%**  
of all scams reported in 2022 were **online purchase scams**.

**74.0%**  
of those who reported being targeted by online purchase scams **lost money**.

**Online purchase scams** were the **#1 riskiest scam type** for ages 35 to 64.

**2 EMPLOYMENT**  
Job applicants are led to believe they are applying for or have just been hired for a promising new job when instead they have given personal information via a fake application or money to scammers for “training” or “equipment.” In another variation, a person may be “overpaid” with a fake check and asked to wire back the difference.



**Employment scams** rose on the list of riskiest scams in 2022 due to a high reported median dollar loss (\$1,500) and an increase in submissions. This scam type was the #1 riskiest for ages 18-34 years old.



**Online scams** were more likely to result in a reported monetary loss than those perpetrated in person or via phone.



**Home improvement scams** — the #4 riskiest scam type — had a high median dollar loss (\$1,500). This scam type was the #1 riskiest for ages 65+.

**3 CRYPTOCURRENCY**  
Investors are scammed into paying money or trading their own digital assets, known as cryptocurrencies, even though the scammer has no intention of building a company. These scams also involve scenarios in which investors store their cryptocurrencies with fraudulent exchanges.



**Military consumers** reported a higher median dollar loss (\$238) when targeted by scams than non-military consumers (\$163). **Active-duty military** reported losing significantly more money (\$490) than did military spouses (\$248) and veterans (\$200).

**4 HOME IMPROVEMENT**  
Door-to-door solicitors offer quick, low-cost repairs and then either take payment without returning, do shoddy work, or “find” issues that dramatically raise the price. These types of schemes often occur after a natural disaster.



In 2022, people ages 18 to 24 reported a higher median dollar loss (\$220) than

other age groups for the first time since we began publishing the *BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report* in 2016.



Scammers continue to target people using text message, up 39.6% from 2021.

Scams perpetrated via text message had the second highest reported median dollar loss (\$579) behind those perpetrated in person (\$715).

**5 ADVANCE FEE LOAN**  
A loan is guaranteed but once the victim pays up-front charges such as taxes or a “processing fee,” the loan never materializes.

**BBBMarketplaceTrust.org/RiskReport**  
**Report a scam at: BBB.org/ScamTracker**

# 10 Tips for AVOIDING A SCAM

1

**Never send money to someone you have never met face-to-face.**



2

**Don't click on links or open attachments in unsolicited email or text messages.**

3

**Don't believe everything you see or read.**

**Scammers are great at mimicking official seals, fonts, and other details.** Just because a website or email looks official does not mean it is. Even Caller ID can be faked.

4

**Take precautions when making online purchases.**

**Don't shop on price alone.** Scammers offer hard-to-find products at great prices.

**Don't buy online unless the transaction is secure.** Make sure the website has "https" in the URL (the extra "s" is for "secure") and a small lock icon on the address bar. Even then, the site could be shady. Research the company first at BBB.org.

**Avoid making quick purchases while browsing social media.** Scammers advertise websites that offer great deals, but either don't deliver the product at all or deliver counterfeit products.

**Do more research** on those products you found via online search.

5

**Be extremely cautious when dealing with anyone you've met online.**



6

**Never share personally identifiable information with someone who has contacted you unsolicited.**

7

**Don't be pressured to act immediately.**

8

**Use secure, traceable transactions when making payments for goods, services, taxes, and debts. (Gift cards can't be traced!)**



9

**Whenever possible, work with businesses that have proper identification, licensing, and insurance.**

10

**Be cautious about what you share on social media.**

