

SENIOR SCAMS

(And How to Avoid Them)

Brennen Boze

The Law Offices of Carol Bertsch, PC



The Law Offices of
Carol Bertsch, PC

Assisting Seniors, Helping Families

Elder Law

- Focused on the needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, and their families
- Relatively new: Baby Boomers and the growing elder population
- Areas of Focus:
 - Estate Planning
 - Probate
 - Guardianship
 - Long-Term Care Planning and Medicaid Eligibility



**Why do
scammers
target the
elderly?**





Your Private Information

Social Security number

Bank account/PIN numbers

Credit card numbers

Date of birth

Why do they want your personal information?

Fuel for identity theft – use your information to get credit/services

Break into your bank accounts

Stolen data used for phishing scams – to impersonate someone else

Sell your info to other criminals

Target company personnel to defraud companies

Four Signs it's a Scam: (the 4 P's)

Pretend to be from an organization
you know or do business with

Problem or a Prize

Pressure you to act immediately

Pay, now and in a specific way
(wire transfer, gift card)

Standard Practice:

Remember: **no legitimate** business/govt agency will call you unsolicited and request your personal info

Never divulge private information to a person calling you



Specific Scams



Grandma, I
need money
– and please
don't tell my
parents...

“Hi
Grandma,
it's me...”

“Hi
Grandma,
do you
know who
this is?”

What to do:

Hang up

Don't say "is that you, <name>?" – you just gave the scammer a name

Don't send money

Do call your child

Do call your grandchild at a number you know

Virus
Detected!

Popup on your
computer

Call now for free
security scan and
to repair your
device

Phone call from
“tech support”

What to do:

Hang up

Ignore pop up – restart your computer if necessary

Do not call number

Never give remote access to computer to an unsolicited caller

Sell your
timeshare

Sell your time
share for you

You pay up front
fee

What to do:

01

Don't buy a time share

02

Research the company with the state office of the attorney general

03

Get a contract in writing

04

Be clear on refund of fees if no sale occurs

IRS Calling



Caller claims to be with the Internal Revenue Service



Threatening and urgent



Demands payment

What to do:

Hang up!

The IRS initially contacts taxpayers by mail

The IRS does not call and demand payment over the phone, especially by prepaid card

“Your car’s extended warranty”

Caller says the warranty on your vehicle is expiring and you have the chance to extend it

Act like they’re from the dealer, but are actually a scammer

Either trying to get card information or sell you a bogus “service contract”

What to do:

Ignore the call – don't pick up or call them back

Your dealership/manufacturer will not follow up to extend your warranty

Remember: they may know make and model of your car – public info

What to do:

If you **are** for some reason interested in a service contract, ask to see the contract up front

Look for exclusions in the contract (they **WILL** be there)

Never give your credit card info over the phone

Reverse Mortgages



May be the right choice for you –
but know what you're getting
into



Be wary of a vendor/contractor
convincing you to take out a
reverse mortgage to pay them



Home equity loan is usually
much less expensive if you need
cash quickly

What to do:

Read up carefully on reverse mortgages to make sure it's the right vehicle for you

Be careful of giving Power of Attorney to someone – could use it to take out RM on your house

May not be an outright scam or fraud, but may not be in your best interest – be wary of high-pressure sales

If you paid a scammer:

Contact your bank – may need to put a hold on your account

Contact credit card company and report fraudulent charges and ask if they can reverse the transaction

If paid with a gift card, contact the company that issued the card, report fraud, ask for refund

If you gave
out
personal
info:

Go to [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.IdentityTheft.gov) to report and get a recovery plan

Change passwords regularly – don't be obvious!

Monitor your credit for any new accounts opened in your name

Other ways to avoid scams:

Silence unknown calls directly
through your phone settings

Download a call-blocking app –
but do your research first!

Check with your phone
provider for free call-blocking
or call-labeling services

What about the National Do Not Call Registry?

Designed to stop real
companies who follow
the law

FTC cannot block calls

If they're ignoring the
Registry, it's probably a
scam

Questions?

Brennen Boze
8703 Broadway
San Antonio, Texas 78217
bboze@assistingseniors.com
210-892-4555



The Law Offices of
Carol Bertsch, PC

Assisting Seniors, Helping Families