



CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE BULLETIN

Non-delivery scams

May 29, 2020

FRAUD: RECOGNIZE, REJECT, REPORT

As the CAFC surpasses 1000 reports of criminals trying to profit from the COVID-19 pandemic, we urge Canadians to be on the look-out for frauds and scams. With physical distancing and isolation measures in practice, many Canadians are turning to online shopping. Criminals are aware of the increase in online traffic. As a result, the CAFC is observing a rise in non-delivery scam reporting.

Many non-delivery scams currently relate to the rising demand for personal protective equipment (PPE). With stronger recommendations to wear face masks, we are noticing an increase in scams offering medical and non-medical face masks. Other advertised PPE items include hand sanitizers, gloves and face shields.

As Canadians stay home, there is a notable increase in scams offering products such as gym equipment, hot tubs, hair clippers, kids' toys and pets. **CAREFUL!** Animal scams begin as classified ads for lower priced or free animals. The majority of these feature puppies or kittens. After an exchange of messages, you are asked to send one payment after another. You are told that the money sent covers shipping, vaccinations, certificates, insurance, etc. In the end, you never receive the promised pet.

Warning signs

- Be cautious of blowout sales or greatly reduced prices (e.g. 80%).
- Notice text with spelling errors or references to the product as *"the item"*.
- Beware of pets being offered at below market value.
- If you are asked to pay any fee, then it isn't free.

How to protect yourself

- Know the market value of the product you are looking for.
- Locate and verify the company's contact information (address, phone number, email) before you buy.
- Look for customer reviews and ratings from third-party sources.
- Whenever possible, pick up a new pet and provide the payment in person.

If you think you or someone you know has been a victim of fraud, please contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or report online at www.antifraudcentre.ca.



Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Gendarmerie royale du Canada



Competition Bureau
Canada

Bureau de la concurrence
Canada



Ontario Provincial Police

Canada