

Essex Police Fraud Alert System

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28th August 2020

Pension Scams

During these times of uncertainty there are increased offers of financial investment and figures from the Financial Conduct Authority and the Pensions Regulator show over £30 million has been lost to pension scams since 2017.

Fraudsters will target pension pots large and small with losses anywhere between £1,000 and £500,000.



Some **Top Tips** on how to protect your retirement:

- 1 Know how much is in the pot**—many people admit to not knowing how much money is currently in their pension making it difficult to make informed decisions.
- 2 Do your research**—you wouldn't make any sort of large purchase without checking the product out first. I should be the same with financial decisions! Take your time to ensure you know exactly what you are purchasing and make use of resources such as the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority) Register to ensure that the firm is registered or speak to a financial advisor.
- 3 Don't be overconfident**—nearly two thirds of people (65%) say they feel that they would be confident in spotting a scam, and yet many would still unknowingly put themselves at risk, with nearly 40% of people saying they would be swayed by tactics such as 'limited time offers'
- 4 Spot the signs**—as above, be wary of 'limited time offers', legitimate firms will never try to panic you or push you into making a rushed decision. Many scams also promise 'guaranteed high returns' on your savings and most offers will be as a result of unexpected emails, phone calls or social media messages.

For more information, read the Action Fraud article [here](#).

You can find more help and advice at www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart

Government Number ‘Spoofing’

The government has issued a warning following a number of scam calls being made that appear to come from a legitimate government telephone number. The number is that of the Government Legal Department and fraudsters are attempting to scare people into making payments by telling them they will be arrested if they refuse.

A Government spokesman said:

"We have been made aware that the Government Legal Department (GLD) general enquiry number (020 7210 8500) is being used by fraudsters to try and extract money from members of the public.

In most of the reported cases, the fraudsters claim they are calling from GLC or HMRC, with the GLD enquiry line number showing in the caller ID.

They are usually very aggressive on the phone, threatening members of the public that if they do not pay a certain amount of money, the police will arrest them. The calls are NOT being made by GLD or HMRC.

GLD will never call you from its enquiry line number. We will never ask you for your bank details or to pay us money over the phone.

If you receive a call of the type described about, please hang up and call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 immediately. When making your report, please ask for it to be associated with report reference NFRC200803859141."

CALLER ID SPOOFING

Don't trust your caller ID.

Scammers can make any name or number show up on your caller ID. That's called spoofing.

How it can happen:



1. Scammers use automated dialing software to set up robocalls.



2. They decide what to display on your caller ID. It could look like a local call.



3. They start calling, and can make millions of calls over internet phone lines in minutes.

What you can do:

Use call blocking. Talk to your phone carrier and read expert reviews about your options.

For more information visit the Ofcom website [ofcom.org.uk](https://www.ofcom.org.uk)