

The Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia

How to avoid Internet fraud

- Know the source. This means checking into a Web site before handing over any personal information — especially personal financial information. This doesn't mean you can't shop or surf at unknown sites, but make sure you've done your homework before exchanging information.
- Read your e-mail carefully. Many fraudulent offers come in the form of e-mails because the Internet makes it possible to send thousands at a relatively low cost. Use a mail program that allows you to screen out these mass mailings, and you'll spend less time with your finger on the delete key.
- Deal only with reputable organizations, and don't give out personal or financial information unless you are sure you're in a secure environment. Don't judge reliability by how nice or sophisticated the Web site may seem.
- Be careful at auction sites, one of the areas that generate a lot of complaints.
 - Understand as much as possible about how the auction works, what your obligations are as a buyer, and what are the seller's obligations.
 - Find out what the Web site/company does if a problem occurs and consider insuring the transaction and the shipment.
 - Learn as much as possible about the seller, especially if the only information you have is an e-mail address. If it is a business, check the Better Business Bureau where it is located. Examine the feedback on the seller. Remember because of the difference in laws, it may be much harder to solve a problem if the seller is located outside Canada .
 - Find out if shipping and delivery are included in the auction price or are additional costs. If they are extra, find out exactly how much you'll be charged.
 - Don't give out your social insurance number or driver's license number.
- Don't give out your credit card number(s) online unless the site is secure and reputable. Sometimes a tiny padlock appears on the screen. This symbolizes a higher level of security to transmit data. While not a guarantee, it may might provide you with some assurance.
- Don't invest in anything you are not absolutely sure about. Do your homework on the investment to ensure that it is legitimate.
- Be sceptical of individuals representing themselves as Nigerian or foreign government officials asking for your help in placing large sums of money in overseas bank accounts.
- For information about e-mail hoaxes, see <http://www.scambusters.org/legends.html>.

Finding a lawyer

Lawyers are listed in the Yellow Pages of the phone book. You can also call legal information and lawyer referral service of the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia.

Legal Aid

Nova Scotia Legal Aid has offices across the province. They are listed in the White Pages of the phone book.

Dalhousie Legal Aid serves the Halifax area. The number is (902) 423-8105.

Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia

The Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, formerly the Public Legal Education Society of Nova Scotia, provides information about the law through booklets, pamphlets, a speakers' bureau, and Dial-a-Law, a telephone information line. We also provide a lawyer referral service. Callers will be given the names of lawyers who will give an interview of up to 30 minutes for \$20 plus HST.

For more information on the law or to use the lawyer referral service call **455-3135** in the Halifax area or **1-800-665-9779** toll free in the rest of Nova Scotia.

For information on publications, the speakers' bureau and other business please call **(902) 454-2198** or email lisns@attcanada.ca. To see our publications online, visit our website at www.legalinfo.org.

To use Dial-a-Law, which provides legal information on tape, please call **(902) 420-1888**. This is a 24-hour service. It is not toll free.

Information in this brochure does not replace advice from a lawyer. If you have a legal problem, you should talk with a lawyer.

We try to keep our materials accurate and up to date. However, laws do change. You can check with a lawyer for changes to laws mentioned in this brochure.

The Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia is a non-profit organization that provides the public with information and resources about the law. The Society receives funding from the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, Department of Justice Canada, the Nova Scotia Department of Justice and donations from Nova Scotians.

November 2001