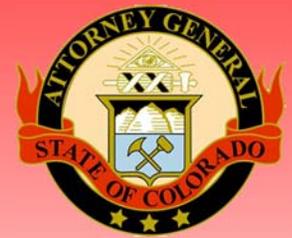


STOP Fraud Colorado™

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In today's fast paced world of instant communication and social media, many adults have turned to online dating sites to find love, especially around Valentine's Day. Unfortunately, not everyone using dating sites is looking for romance. Thousands of people have been victimized by Valentine Villains using online romance scams. Victims wind up not only embarrassed, but often with financial losses averaging more than \$10,000 per person.

Advancements in technology have allowed this long-time scam to move from the pen-pal era in to the age of Internet dating sites. These villains represent themselves as beautiful foreign models, wealthy businessmen, or even deployed military servicemembers seeking love. In reality they are scam artists trying to swindle sweethearts out of money or personal information.



Colorado Attorney General
Cynthia H. Coffman



Key Signs of a Valentine Villain:

- You met online through chat rooms, dating websites, social media, or other sites.
- The villain claims to be a U.S citizen but uses poor grammar that is indicative of a non-native English speaker.
- The villain claims to be in a foreign country for work or personal travel.
- After regular and ongoing correspondence, the villain has a so-called emergency, such as a medical issue or an auto accident and requests money via wire transfer or other money transmittal services.

Tips to avoid the Sweetheart Swindle:

- Limit the disclosure of personal information to unknown individuals.
- Be skeptical of everything, be your own detective.
- **Never** send money to someone you haven't met in person.
- If someone claims to be a U.S. citizen in need of help, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy.



Register for
Fraud Alerts

For additional information relating to Valentine Villains, please visit us at www.StopFraudColorado.gov. If you have been victimized by a scam or wish to report suspicious activity, please [file a report here](#). To speak with a representative call 1-800-222-4444.



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