

SCAM ALERT

Scam: Online Rentals

Target: All Seniors

Scam artists are listing homes for rent that do not belong to them. When you inquire about the listing, the scam artist explains that a credit report must be run for you to be considered. The site address they give you to obtain your credit report is not real. Not only do these scam artists obtain your personally identifiable information such as Social Security Number (SSN), driver's license number and address, they may even ask for bank account information! Although they have not "charged" you for the credit report that you will never receive, in the fine print, the site enrolls you in a credit monitoring service that charges approximately \$30.00 per month billed to one of the card numbers you provided! Although it says you may cancel in seven (7) days, the scam artists are typically not reachable and there never was a rental available.

Scam Artists Posing as Rental Agents!

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) offers these suggestions to avoid this type of scam:

- 🔊 **Do not share your information online:** Never give your personally identifiable information to anyone online unless it is a company you know and have been doing business with.
- 🔊 **Do not wire money:** Never wire money or send a cash card for security deposits, application fees or first month's rent. Wiring money is like sending cash and you cannot get it back!
- 🔊 **Never pay before you sign a lease:** Before you sign the lease and before you pay anything, visit the property or have someone you trust visit it first. If this is impossible, research the address on line and make certain the person you are working with is the true owner or agent.
- 🔊 **Take a friend:** When possible, take a friend or family member with you to meet with the owner or agent and/or view the property.

**If you think you may be a victim of a scam, contact
San Bernardino County Adult Protective Services (APS) at
877-565-2020 or your local police department.**