

Telltale signs of investment fraud

IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE

Scam artists look like you and me. They join our churches and community organizations and use the friends they make to spread their scams. If you catch them in a lie, they will make up another lie so fast you may not even notice. For their scams to work, they need to gain your complete trust and confidence. No wonder so many intelligent people fall under their influence and end up losing their life savings. It can happen to anyone—even you, your friends, and family.

HOW TO TELL IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS BEEN TARGETED BY A SCAMMER

If you think a friend or family member is the target of a scam artist, ask yourself these questions:

1. Is there a new person in their life whom they depend on for advice?
Scammers will become the best and most trustworthy friend of someone they think they can con.
2. Do they mention they are helping out a friend or caregiver? A con artist may be a friend or caregiver who is telling your loved one that they are going through hard times.
3. Are they suddenly not spending money or going out anymore? Many times a person who has been scammed can no longer afford to attend social functions.
4. Are they ignoring family or avoiding friends? People who have been scammed are usually very embarrassed and don't want to tell anyone about their misfortune.
5. Have they stopped keeping up their home or taking care of themselves? If someone has gone into debt, or spent all of their savings because of a bad investment, they may not have the income, savings, or heart to maintain their usual lifestyle. Some people may even stop taking care of themselves, and end up ill.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? REPORT IT!

Always take the time to report suspicious investment activity to the BC Securities Commission. Your care and attention may save your friend, family member, or someone in your community from falling victim to a scam artist.

You can report a scam online at www.investright.org (see *Talk to us*), or call BCSC Inquiries at 1-800-376-6393.