



For Immediate Release
June 24, 2008

District Attorney Nola Foulston warns consumers of a possible scam involving the purchase of memberships in a travel club. This Office is currently investigating and asks that anyone who recently attended any such seminar call the Consumer Fraud Division of the District Attorney's Office at 316 660.3653.

The events appear to be as follows:

1. A consumer receives a phone call or postcard by mail inviting him/her to attend a seminar held at a local hotel to learn more about investing in a travel club.
2. At the seminar, the consumer is encouraged to purchase "travel credits" for a dollar amount. The consumer is told that these credits are renewed every year for a level annual amount and available to the consumer until the age of 72.
3. The presenter promises to provide the consumer a 'kit' that includes a user ID and password to access travel websites so as to purchase discounted travel packages and apply the member's credits to further reduce the price of the travel package.
4. The consumer does not receive a user ID or password. Moreover, the travel websites to which the consumer is referred require a password and user ID. Some of the websites are under construction. Blog sites report that even after one has the ability to access the travel websites, the purchased product is essentially worthless due to the consumer's inability to access certain companies, inability to redeem coupons, and limited travel packages from which to choose.

The District Attorney reminds all consumers that when solicited to purchase goods or services, you should do the following:

a. Before you purchase, contact the Better Business Bureau or the Consumer Fraud Division to determine if any prior complaints have been made regarding this business or person.

b. Determine in advance if the seller provides a written contract, explaining in understandable terms exactly what you are purchasing. Is there detailed information setting forth a description of what you are purchasing? What payments are due and when? Are there any cancellation rights? Is there information given as to what happens if you have a problem with the product or service? If no information is given, or if the information is difficult to comprehend, or if the information is scant, this is a red flag.

c. Determine if this seller is local or out of state. Does the seller provide sufficient identifying information as to the company, its location, and contact information for individuals if you have a question or problem? Can you verify this information? If none is given, this is an immediate red flag.

d. Determine whether the seller needs any licenses or registrations from this State's regulatory entities in order to conduct business in this state. Does the person or company have them? For example, generally speaking, a "transient merchant" (one that does not have a brick and mortar location in this state for at least 6 months out of the year or travels from place to place in the state transacting any temporary business) must have transient merchant license and post a bond, as required by state statute. Does the seller have such a license? Does the seller provide in the contract a three day right to cancel? Generally one is required. If these items are missing, this is a red flag.

e. Determine whether the company or person's sales pitch sounds too good to be true. This is a red flag. If it does, it usually is a scam.

f. Do you feel pressured to buy? Are you offered incredible discounts if you "buy today?" Again, these are red flags that should immediately raise reservations for the consumer.

If you are not sure whether the person you are dealing with is a properly licensed or legitimate company, contact the Consumer Fraud Division and your local Better Business Bureau.

If you think you have been a victim of a scam, please call the District Attorney's Office at 316-660-3653.

For additional information on protecting yourself from these crimes, contact the Consumer Fraud and Economic Crimes Division of the District Attorney's Office at 660-3700 or go to the District Attorney's website at <http://sedgwickcounty.org/da> for helpful links.

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