

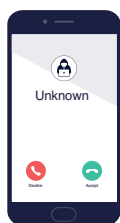
Avoiding scams

Pension scams are increasing as criminals exploit fears and uncertainty.

Protect yourself from scams

Scammers can come across as financially knowledgeable and apparently legitimate, with websites, references and materials that can seem like the real deal.

Here are some top tips to protect yourself and your pension:



Reject unexpected offers

If you're contacted out of the blue about a pension opportunity, it's likely to be high risk or a scam. Be wary of any free offers, and if you receive a marketing call about your pension, the best thing you can do is to hang up. Also watch out for text messages with misleading links. Scammers will try and entice you any way they can.



Don't be pressured or rush into anything

It's important you don't rush into a decision as criminals try to take advantage of any fears you may have about your pension's performance or its security. If you do make any decisions, take your time, do your research and make sure that your pension is safe.



Always check who you are dealing with

Check the Financial Services Register, which will tell you if the company who is contacting you is Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) authorised. Also be wary of 'clone' companies using a similar name. If in doubt check the register and use the contact details used there – not the ones given to you. Review the FCA warning list to check the risk level of a pension or investment opportunity.



Get help and advice

If you are seriously considering changing your pension arrangements then consider getting financial guidance or advice before you do, either from a financial adviser or:

Financial Services Register:

www.fca.org.uk/firms/financial-services-register

MoneyHelper:

www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en

Pension Wise:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/our-work/advice-partnerships/pension-wise/

Useful links and information



ScamSmart is an FCA regulated website providing information on how to avoid investment and pension scams.

Visit www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart for more information.



The National Cyber Security Centre is the UK's independent authority on cyber security.

Take a look at www.ncsc.gov.uk



Which? offers independent advice and information about consumer rights.

Head on over to www.which.co.uk



Suspect it? Report it!

Report the scam to the FCA by contacting their Consumer Helpline on freephone 0800 111 6768 or using the reporting form at www.fca.org.uk

Report an incident to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or at www.actionfraud.police.uk

If you're in the middle of a transfer, contact your pension provider immediately as they may be able to interrupt the transfer and stop the fraudster from claiming your pension. You can also call the Financial Crimes and Scams Unit on 0800 015 4402 to see what other help is available.