

Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia

How to avoid phone fraud

- Never give your calling-card number to anyone over the phone no matter how convincing they sound. The telephone company will never ask for your calling-card number unless you have called them in the first place.
- Read your phone bill carefully each month. Watch for unfamiliar company names, logos, or charges that you don't understand or don't remember ordering. Call your carrier or the number associated with the charge and ask for an explanation.
- "Cramming" occurs when telephone customers are charged for services they've never ordered or received.
- Ask that all offers from communications providers be sent to you in writing so that you may review them before making a decision. Read the offers carefully before signing any form, contest entry, cheque, or survey.
- "Slamming," occurs when customers have their telephone service switched without their permission.
- Check your telephone bill periodically to make sure you still have the long-distance company you selected.
- Be cautious about area codes you don't recognize. Check your telephone directory or call the operator to determine where the area code is before making your call. You may be placing international calls without realizing it.
- If you're sure you won't need to make international calls, you can call your long-distance carrier and ask them to put an international block on your telephone line.
- Beware of faxes, e-mails, voice mails, and pages requesting a return call to an unfamiliar number.
- Do not accept collect calls from unfamiliar people.
- Do not return calls to unfamiliar telephone numbers.
- Do not divulge personal information, such as telephone number, credit card number or social insurance number on sweepstakes or raffle tickets. Quite often this information is not secure and may be used for reasons other than intended.

Be wary of scam artists who:

- Claim to represent a charity you are not familiar with;
- Say you need to buy something or pay a fee to win a prize;
- Use a company name that is intended to sound like a government agency or a well-known company;
- Ask for your credit card, calling card, bank account, or social insurance number;
- Pressure you to act on an offer the same day; or
- Claim you have won a prize when you have not entered a contest.

Finding a lawyer

Lawyers are listed in the Yellow Pages of the phone book. You can also call legal information and lawyer referral service of the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia.

Legal Aid

Nova Scotia Legal Aid has offices across the province. They are listed in the White Pages of the phone book.

Dalhousie Legal Aid serves the Halifax area. The number is (902) 423-8105.

Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia

The Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia, formerly the Public Legal Education Society of Nova Scotia, provides information about the law through booklets, pamphlets, a speakers' bureau, and Dial-a-Law (a telephone information line). We also provide a lawyer referral service. Callers will be given the names of lawyers who will give an interview of up to 30 minutes for \$20 plus HST.

For more information on the law or to use the lawyer referral service call **455-3135** in the Halifax area or **1-800-665-9779** toll free in the rest of Nova Scotia.

For information on publications, the speakers' bureau and other business please call **(902) 454-2198** or email lisns@attcanada.ca. To see our publications online, visit our web site at www.legalinfo.org.

To use Dial-a-Law, which provides legal information on tape, please call **(902) 420-1888**. This is a 24-hour service. It is not toll free.

Information in this brochure does not replace advice from a lawyer. If you have a legal problem, you should talk with a lawyer.

We try to keep our materials accurate and up to date. However, laws do change. You can check

with a lawyer for changes to laws mentioned in this brochure.

The Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia is a non-profit organization that provides the public with information and resources about the law. The Society receives funding from the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, Department of Justice Canada, the Nova Scotia Department of Justice and donations from Nova Scotians.

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