

Avoiding coronavirus (COVID-19) scams

A major event like the coronavirus pandemic can initiate new types of scam activity. A rise in pension scams has been reported as scammers try to exploit public fears over the market uncertainty.

Protect yourself from scams

Scammers can come across financially knowledgeable, seemingly 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

During the current climate you may be worried about how your pension is performing. It's important you don't rush into a decision as criminals try to take advantage of any fears you may have. 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 and this 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 for the risk of a pension or investment opportunity to make sure that the company is authorised by the FCA and make sure it's not a scam.



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 The Pension Advisory Service, Pension Wise or a financial adviser.

Useful links and information



Pension Wise offers pre-booked appointments to talk through your retirement options. It's available if you're aged over 50 and have a defined contribution (DC) pension.

Head on over to www.pensionwise.gov.uk



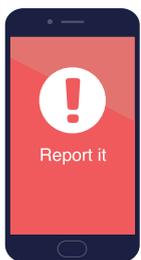
The Pensions Advisory Service provides free, independent and impartial information.

Take a look at www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk



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.



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 provider immediately and then get in touch with The Pensions Advisory Service at www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk