



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hamilton, Bermuda

### **Fraud Prevention Tip: Don't Let the Romance Scam Break Your Heart**

The Bermuda Police Service and the Bermuda Bankers Association wish to advise Bermuda's residents about "romance" scams.

Romance scams begin with a criminal and victim meeting virtually, through an online dating or social networking site. The criminal will try to develop a relationship, sometimes making the victim feel they are in a romantic relationship. This could happen over a period of days, weeks or even months. The criminal will then ask for money or confidential personal information such as bank account or credit card details.

Often the scammer will say that they are in another city or country and that they eventually want to meet the victim in person. Around this time, the criminal will note that they can't afford to travel and will seek assistance from the victim in covering travel costs.

A variation on this theme includes the criminal noting that there's an emergency, a sick family member for example, and that they need financial help from the victim to visit the sick individual. The requests for help are a scam and the money wired by the victim, often in large amounts, is now in the hands of the criminal.

#### **Tips to avoid becoming a victim:**

Always consider the possibility that your recent match on a social media or dating site might be a scammer. Here are some warning signs that your new relationship may be a scam:

- Your new friend moves too fast. Scammers are trying to develop a quick relationship with you so be on your guard when someone professes their love to you.
- If your love interest asks you to send money, or for payments in gift cards, cryptocurrency or through a wire transfer, be very suspicious.
- Does your new friend have an online profile? Look for inconsistencies between what they post, and what they tell you. If you're suspicious, post their profile picture through your browser's reverse image search to see if it's been stolen from the internet.
- If you receive a message from your friend and they use the wrong name, that may be a red flag. Many of these fraudsters are working on multiple victims at the same time.
- Scammers will claim that they live close to you but that they're working overseas. They do this so that they have numerous reasons to ask for you for money. Be on your guard.
- If you receive a cheque or another form of payment from someone you've met online and they ask you to cash it and send a portion of the funds back to them - don't do it. This is known as the "overpayment" scam.



### **If you think you may be a victim:**

If you think you may be a victim of a romance scam or any other kind of fraud, it's important to contact police immediately.

### **Resources and Additional Information:**

information about financial crime, and tools that are available to assist consumers and small businesses is available on the BBA website at <https://bermudabankers.org/for-consumers-and-businesses> and on the websites and social media channels of Bermuda's four licensed banks.

### **About the Bermuda Police Service**

*Around the clock our Police officers, support staff and Reserve officers work hard to provide a policing service to the public of Bermuda. Together we look at where we can make the most difference to improving the quality of everyone's lives, and creating a safer Bermuda.*

*In our work we put our communities first – we want to be there when victims need us the most and when criminals don't. But, most importantly, we want people to be safe and feel safe whether they are in their homes, on the streets or at work in our country. Our Mission Statement: "Making Bermuda Safer."*

### **About the Bermuda Bankers Association**

*The Bermuda Bankers Association represents Bermuda's licensed domestic banks. Our mission is to educate and provide resources that support financial literacy amongst all residents of Bermuda. We also advocate for sound public policy and regulations that maintain the safety and soundness of Bermuda's banking sector.*

### **Contact Information**

Please direct queries to:

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