NCA National Crime Agency

STOP! THINK FRAUD

FCA FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY Firm Checker

STOP INVESTMENT FRAUD

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Investment fraud is one of the most common forms of financial crime that starts in adverts online.

Investment Fraud happens when criminals deceive you into paying your money into non-existent investment plans and trading schemes, believed to grow your money by large amounts. Fraudsters will promote their fictitious schemes with online ads and social posts, designed to draw in unaware investors, but they have only one aim: to steal your money.

Knowledge of investment fraud is the best protection.

Before engaging in any investment opportunity:

CHECK

- Check the FCA Firm Checker to ensure a company is authorised.
- Check Companies House to confirm there is an existing company.

BE VIGILANT

Look out for the warning signs:

- Online adverts promising guaranteed returns or low-risk investments
- Endorsements from celebrities or well-known figures
- Being asked to communicate over instant messaging and social media services
- Invitations to join an exclusive investment group
- Being instructed not to tell family or friends about your investment
- Requests for “tax”, release fees or verification fees before withdrawing any funds
- Ongoing pressure to invest

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE BEEN A VICTIM OF INVESTMENT FRAUD:

1. **Contact your Bank**
   Ask them to freeze the funds and account whilst investigation takes place.
2. **Report Fraud**
   Submit a report online or by calling 0300 123 2040.
3. Be cautious of services offering to recover your money, as fraudsters often re-contact victims to demand more money.
4. Retain any messages or communication trails that you may have to support the investigation.