



CONNECTICUT CONSUMER PROTECTION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 / Issue 2 / February 2026

SCAM ALERT

What it is: Online Furniture Shopping Scams

How it works:

Scammers create fake furniture websites or ads that imitate legitimate retailers, offering high quality furniture at extremely low prices.

These sites often use stolen images, fake reviews, and limited time “flash sales” to pressure buyers into making quick purchases.

Once payment is made, often through wire transfers, gift cards, or cryptocurrency, the furniture is never delivered, and seller becomes unreachable.

How to protect yourself:

Only purchase furniture from verified and reputable retailers.

Be cautious of prices that seem too good to be true and websites with poor grammar, missing contact information, or no physical address.

Use secure payment methods like credit cards and avoid sellers who insist on unusual payment options.

Searching for a Tax Preparer? Verify First, Hire Second

Tax season can be overwhelming for consumers as they are gathering the necessary documents to file correctly and on time. To help alleviate that stress, we recommend that consumers start early, hire a licensed professional, and ask questions before they sign. **Here are some ways to protect yourself this tax season:**

Follow our pre-hiring checklist

- 1. Ask for recommendations:** Ask a trusted friend or family member for a tax preparer recommendation. It is best to use someone who is local and available all year round if questions come up.
- 2. Confirm the accountant’s credentials:** Consumers should use eLicense, a public search tool, to verify credentials for a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and CPA Firm.
CPAs and CPA Firms must hold an active credential with DCP to file tax returns.
- 3. Read through reviews:** Search the name of the accountant followed by “complaint” or “review.” This can help narrow your search.
- 4. Look for the Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN):** All tax professionals must have a PTIN and included with their signature.

Signs of a scam

Red flags indicating a fraudulent tax preparer include:

- Asks you to sign a blank form and promises to handle the rest
- Promotes “fast” or “massive” refunds
- Refuses to sign the tax return or provide credential number
- Does not provide a copy of the tax return or related documents
- Demands payment through gift cards, wire transfers, or peer-to-peer apps
- Does not sign the “Paid Tax Preparer Only” section on your tax return or [Form 1040](#). *Their signature attests that they helped prepare your taxes.*



SPEAKING REQUESTS

Want DCP to speak to your organization, or table at your event? Contact Erin Walsh at erin.e.walsh@ct.gov to submit a request.

Contact Us

Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection

450 Columbus Boulevard,
Suite 901

Hartford, CT 06103-1840

Main Line: (860) 713-6100
(8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Consumer Complaint Center

(860) 713-6300

Toll Free: (800) 842-2649

8:30am-4:30pm

Email:

DCP.complaints@ct.gov

VISIT US ONLINE

CT.GOV/DCP

Who Can and Cannot File My Taxes?

Can File:

- **Certified Public Accountants** (CPAs) with an active license through DCP. Accounting firms, including home offices, must hold DCP's **Certified Public Accountancy Firm Permit**. These credentials allow them to file taxes and represent on the taxpayers' behalf.
- **Enrolled agents** can file and represent a taxpayer before the IRS.
- Individuals with a **Paid Tax Preparer Permit** can file and prepare but cannot represent taxpayers.

Cannot File:

- Anyone with a **CPA Certification Registration** cannot sign tax documents or file a tax return. These individuals are often training to become an accountant.

To learn more, visit our [Hiring a Tax Professional page](#).

Romance Scams

Romance scams are growing in popularity due to the increased use of dating apps and websites. In 2021, consumers lost \$547 million related to romance scams. Stay vigilant by looking out for these warning signs:

They can never meet up

- Although the person claims they want to see you, there always seems to be an issue that prevents them from meeting you in person.

They ask you for money

- There are several reasons they'll give, but the end result is the same, they come to you for money. Common reasons are health, travel, or legal issues.

They tell you how to pay

- They'll ask for your money in a certain way, usually in some way that makes it hard for you to get your money back, such as wire transfer, Venmo, PayPal, or CashApp.

You feel rushed

- Scammers will pressure you to act immediately. This can prevent you from questioning things.

Report romance scams to [FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center](#)

Have a tip we missed? A topic you want more information about? Send us an email at DCP.Communications@ct.gov.