

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Consumer Affairs
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Thursday, 28 November 2024

STAY SCAM-SAFE THIS FESTIVE SEASON

The Allan Labor Government is urging Victorians to be aware of online scams in the lead up to the festive season.

Boxing Day, New Year, Black Friday and Cyber Monday are massive retail events in Australia, with an estimated \$30 billion spent over the summer of 2023–2024 – and online scammers and cyber criminals can take advantage of more people shopping online.

Scamwatch reports that Australians lost \$7.1 million to online shopping scams in 2023, with \$1.65 million from within Victoria.

A common scam to look out for is notifications about parcel deliveries. Consumers may receive texts, emails or notifications asking them to click on a link, but should always try to validate these requests by going through the courier's official website or app.

While anyone can fall victim to a scam, there are some ways Victorians can protect themselves. Spot a scam by looking out for red flags including:

- a product or service that sounds 'too good to be true'
- a sense of urgency or pressure to act quickly
- an unusual web address or web address that's different to the usual webpage for a seller
- an unusual or specific method of payment, for example, cryptocurrency or gift card payment.

It always pays to be extra cautious by checking the business' website, social media accounts or contacting the business independently to check whether a call or message is genuine.

Service Victoria has launched a new Spot a Scam quiz to help Victorians improve their knowledge of scams. The quiz tests if consumers know how to recognise a scam, and then provides tailored practical advice and information.

Victorians can test their scam knowledge now on the Service Victoria app and website at service.vic.gov.au/spotascam.

Scams can be reported to Consumer Affairs Victoria at consumer.vic.gov.au/contact-us.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"Doing your shopping online can be cheap and convenient, but keep an eye out for deals that are too good to be true."

"If something doesn't look right, think before you click, and seek support from Consumer Affairs Victoria if you think you've been scammed online."