South Shore Bank

Noteworthy News

Volume Issue • November 2020

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Six Common Scams to Watch Out For and How to Stay Safe

A scam can be initiated via the computer (email, internet, social media), text, postal mail, in person, or a phone call. No matter the origin of the scam, the characteristics are the same:

- First, there is something to pique your interest – someone in trouble, big discount offers, lottery win.
- Second, the individual contacting you seems trustworthy, super friendly, and seems to care about you.
- Third, there's a deadline associated with the offer – act fast, act now.

There will always be scams, particularly those targeted at seniors. This month's newsletter identifies some common scams and some tips to help you take control of the situation and stay safe and stay in control.

Grandparent Scam

One of the most common scams presented to seniors is the Grandparent Scam. The caller claims to be a relative, a grandson or granddaughter, and the call is urgent. Typically, the grandchild is out of town and is in trouble, needs money fast for some emergency, and doesn't want the rest of the family to know. The caller may have bits of information, some of which could be collected from sources like social media, and prompts the senior to provide more information, making the call appear genuine.

- This is not a legitimate call. Hang up the phone and contact your family or the authorities.

Sweepstakes Scam

In this case, the scammer would send their target a check or something else of value, whether in the mail, email, text or phone call, that indicates the recipient won something. In order to claim the "prize," the recipient may have to send a check or money order to cover taxes and fees, and may be asked for banking information to deposit the winnings, or to buy something to enter the contest. This is so the scammer can obtain private banking information. The name of the sweepstakes may seem familiar – quite often scammers will do this to make it recognizable.

- Legitimate contents do not ask for money or financial information up front. Do not respond to these messages with a check, money order or cash. It is always best to never provide identifying information to anyone over the phone, text, or email especially your bank account information.

Home Improvement Scam

Scammers target seniors by providing home improvement services in order to gain access to their home, belongings, and personal information. They will arrive at their target's house, offer free inspections, or offer services to fix something they deem "needs work". Scammer will pretend to be working for the local town or county to appear more legitimate.

The homeowner should stay in control of the situation and not be intimidated by the person at their door.

- Never let them in your home.
- Be suspicious of unsolicited offers, and ask for identification.
- If work does need to be done, ask friends and neighbors who they would recommend. Be sure to get references, and only used licensed contractors.
- Never pay the full amount up front. Pay as the work is completed according to a contract.

Telemarketer Scam

Scammers will target seniors in an effort to obtain financial information by claiming to be from an important institution such as a credit card company, Microsoft, Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, phone company, power company, and so on. **Never feel pressured to commit to anything over the phone.**

- Don't rely upon caller ID to let you know who the call is coming from. Technology today allows for calls to be masked and appear to be from a number you know or can associate with, but it is not.
- Never give out personal information to an unsolicited caller. Never provide birthday, social security number (even the last 4 digits), your mother's maiden name, pet's name, bank account information or anything that can be used as password or identifying information.
- Hang up and contact the company the caller claims to be with directly if you feel you need to talk to them. Refer to your copy of your phone bill, power bill, or the number on the back of your credit card or bank card to initiate contact.

Internet Scams

There are many ways scammers are using technology to take advantage of seniors. Whether it is a special offer via email, attempts to acquire your user name and password via a scheme, or skimming of information while shopping online, there are ways you can be in control and keep your information safe. If you are computer-savvy, keep these tips in mind to keep your information safe:

- Never click on links in emails.
- Don't open attachments for special offers.
- Be careful of free offers over holidays.
- Watch for malicious adds and popups.
- Don't shop over public wi-fi.
- Be suspicious of gift card scams –buy from trusted sources.
- Know what your product costs.
- Make sure the site is secure – look for the "lock" icon and "https" on your browser address bar when shopping.
- Make sure all computer anti-virus, malware, and security software is up to date.
- Don't save credit card information online; check out as guest if offered on the site.

Charities

While there are many charities that are worthy of your donations, be sure you know who you are donating to.

- Always verify the charity before making any donation by checking with your Attorney General's office.
- Know what the charity is doing with your contribution.
- Avoid charities that will not answer your questions or provide written information about their programs or finances.
- Talk with family, friends, or trusted sources before giving to charity.
- Do not give on the spot before doing research on the charity
- Never give cash or purchase gift cards for payment.

If you feel you have been scammed, or are concerned that you are a victim of fraud, contact your local law enforcement immediately. Remember to keep a close eye on bank and credit card statements, and report any unusual activity. Stay informed. Remember, you are in control!

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Thankful. Grateful.

These words are especially popular this time of year, frequently appearing on a home's front door, surrounded by pumpkins and mums. When I see them, I am reminded of the approaching holiday season, which is a time to celebrate and give thanks for our family, friends and any other invaluable relationship that is a positive constant in this time of change and uncertainty.

While 2020 has been overwhelming to many, I think 2020 has proven to be a year where relationships were built for a common purpose, and where teams were created for the sake of a desired goal.

I see instances of this around me while working with a dedicated team of South Shore Bank employees and executives who are doing whatever is needed to support the community throughout the year. This overwhelming support and commitment to the community was evident through the worst days of the pandemic as we tirelessly worked to support small business and keep our clients safe.

I am thankful to our clients who have, in turn, supported us by changing their behaviors to keep our employees safe.

I am grateful to work for a company so committed to community and to the Shared Success of our personal and business clients.

This month's newsletter will provide a glimpse of a few of the things South Shore Bank is doing within the communities where we live and work. And may just leave us all feeling thankful and grateful…

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Weymouth Food Pantry Volunterring

South Shore Bank employees have had a great time volunteering at the Weymouth Food Pantry the last few weeks! Want to join us? For a list of volunteer opportunities and ways you can help the food pantry, click here.

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South Shore Bank Community Fund

South Shore Bank is donating the full $500,000 in net proceeds from the SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to assist South Shore Bank clients impacted by COVID-19 with rental or mortgage relief. Click here to learn more.

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November Employee Anniversaries

Congratulations!

Margaret Ahl	33 yrs	Tina Cannizzaro	5 yrs
Joseph Dahlstrom	24 yrs	Stephanie Nicklas	5 yrs
Fernanda Barbosa	21 yrs	Mark Coletta	3 yrs
Pamela O'Leary	16 yrs	Jaclyn Hartshorn	3 yrs
Patricia Bartoloni	13 yrs	Christine Clymens	3 yrs
Lawren Amon	9 yrs	Angela Thomas	2 yrs
News Marcelin	7 yrs	Michelle Bibeau	2 yrs
Kathleen Pukt	5 yrs		

Their commitment and dedication is truly appreciated here at South Shore Bank!