



# CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE BULLETIN

Non-delivery scams

May 3, 2021

FRAUD: RECOGNIZE, REJECT, REPORT

As the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre surpasses 19,000 reports of criminals trying to profit from the COVID-19 pandemic, we urge Canadians to be on the look-out for frauds and scams. With physical distancing and isolation measures in practice, many Canadians are turning to online shopping. Criminals are aware of the increase in online traffic and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre is observing a rise in non-delivery scams reporting.

Many non-delivery scams currently relate to the rising demand for personal protective equipment (PPE). We are noticing an increase in scams offering medical and non-medical face masks. Other advertised PPE items include hand sanitizers, gloves and face shields.

As Canadians stay home, there is a notable increase in scams offering products such as gym equipment, hot tubs, hair clippers, kids' toys and pets. **CAREFUL!** Animal scams begin as classified ads for lower priced or free animals. The majority of these feature puppies or kittens. After an exchange of messages, you are asked to send one payment after another. You are told that the money sent covers shipping, vaccinations, certificates, insurance, etc. In the end, you never receive the promised pet.

## Warning signs

- Be cautious of blowout sales or greatly reduced prices (e.g. 80%).
- Notice text with spelling errors or references to the product as "*the item*".
- Beware of pets being offered at below market value.
- If you are asked to pay any fee, then it is not free.

## How to protect yourself

- Know the market value of the product you are looking for.
- Locate and verify the company's contact information (address, phone number, email) before you buy.
- Look for customer reviews and ratings from third-party sources.
- Whenever possible, pick up a new pet and provide the payment in person.

If you have been a victim of fraud or cybercrime, please contact your local police. If you want to report an instance of a scam, fraud or cybercrime, whether you are a victim or not, please use the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's [Online Fraud Reporting System \(FRS\)](#) or by phone at 1-888-495-8501.



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