



BBB supports Military Consumer Month with education and tips

Arlington, VA (July 11, 2023) -- Summer can mean vacations, cookouts, and a relaxing change of pace. For our active-duty military, it is also PCS (permanent change of station) time. Many of the things we take for granted this summer will come with certain risks for our nation's heroes and their families. In recognition of Military Consumer Month, July 1-31, Better Business Bureau® offers tips and resources to help military consumers avoid losing money to scammers.

According to the 2022 BBB Scam Tracker Risk Report, service members, veterans and their families reported **losing significantly more money** when targeted by scams than non-military consumers. Active-duty military reported losing more money (\$490) than did military spouses (\$248) and veterans (\$200). The median dollar loss for active-duty military rose 63.3% from \$300 in 2021 to \$490 in 2022. The median dollar loss rose 45.9% from \$170 in 2021 to \$248 in 2022.



The data also shows online purchase (shopping) scams were riskiest for military consumers. Employment scams were the second riskiest for military spouses and third riskiest for veterans. Home improvement scams were second riskiest for veterans. Tech support scams were third riskiest for military spouses.

Military & Veterans Initiative

BBB Institute for Marketplace Trust, BBB's educational foundation, manages a program aimed at helping military service members, veterans and their families protect their assets, plan for the future, and prosper in a trusted marketplace. The [Military & Veterans Initiative](#) delivers consumer education resources through its network of BBBs serving communities across the United States and Canada.

“Military consumers continue to report higher dollar losses when targeted by scams than non-military consumers,” said Melissa Lanning Trumpower, executive director of the BBB Institute for Marketplace Trust. “BBB Institute is committed to sharing information and resources that can empower military families to protect themselves.”

In recognition of Military Consumer Month, BBB has tips that can help military consumers protect themselves and their families from losing money to scams:

Online shopping: If it looks too good to be true, it probably is. Don’t shop on price alone. Searching for a low price is why people reported losing money. Many scammers offer deals that seem too good to pass up; however, they may lose money to a counterfeit product or may not even get the product.

Employment: Watch out for overpayment scams. Many job scams involve sending fake checks with extra funds. Scammers ask their victims to deposit the check and send back the excess amount, hoping they'll do so before they realize the check was fake and has bounced. Legitimate companies will only send you money after you've done work for them, so be wary of jobs that involve receiving and returning the money.

Home improvement: Ask for references and check them out. Bad contractors will be reluctant to share this information, and scammers won’t wait for you to do your homework. If you can, get references from past customers, both older references to check on the quality of the work and newer references to ensure current employees are up to the task. Check them out at BBB.org to see what other customers have experienced. And always get a written contract with the price, materials, and timeline. The more detail, the better.

Tech support: Never give strangers remote access to your computer. You should only allow remote access to technicians of trustworthy companies you contacted directly through a legitimate customer service number or chat.

Better Business Bureau is a resource serving service members, veterans and their families in communities nationwide. For information on BBB’s Military & Veterans Initiative, please contact Institute@IABBB.org.

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