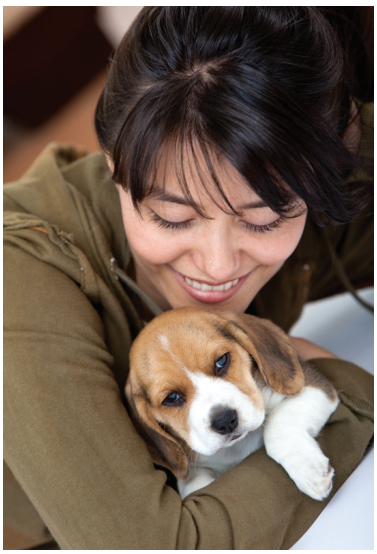
DETECTING AND REPORTING ONLINE PET SALE SCAMS

Looking to adopt or purchase a pet? Beware of fake puppy ads and sites littering the Internet.

From keeping you healthy and active to boosting your mood and social life, owning a dog brings many life-enhancing benefits, and when it comes to finding the ideal furry companion, many turn to the internet. However, as with all transactions that involve the exchange of goods and funds, there is a potential for fraud when buying a pet online. The Better Business Bureau (BB) suggests taking the following measures to prevent getting scammed:

Once you decide on the breed you want, research prices to determine the average, fair amount you can expect to pay. Be sure to maintain a healthy skepticism when looking at the various ads, and if you come across a deal that seems too good to be true, it probably is.

Scrutinize the advertisement, particularly the pet's photo. It is common practice for scammers to use stock art or stolen photos and descriptions from legitimate sellers websites. Copy and paste the ad, and if the identical ad pops up on more than one site, it is likely a scam.



Insist on seeing the pet and its medical record before sending payment. This request will put off a scammer since the pet does not exist. **Did you know?** The Walnut-Diamond Bar Sheriff's Station has an area in the parking lot designated for conducting private property transactions.

Never use an untraceable payment method (money order, wire transfer, or payment service such as Western Union or Moneygram) to pay an individual or company you do not know and trust; instead, pay with a credit card in case you need to dispute the charges.

If you have been a victim of a pet scam, contact the Federal Trade Commission at (877) FTC-HELP and file a report online at https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker/us/reportscam.

Contact Us

publicsafety@diamondbarca.gov

(909) 839-7010 or (909) 348-8334

This leaflet is part of a series of public safety-related materials co-created by City of Diamond Bar and L.A. County Sheriff's Department and available on the City website for viewing, downloading, and sharing.

www.diamondbarca.gov/publicsafety

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