

# SCAM ALERT:

## Business Opportunity Scams



Arizona Attorney General  
Mark Brnovich



### Scam at a glance:

Consumers have lost millions of dollars to con artists who promise to set-up work-at-home or online businesses from which the consumer can earn a substantial income. When the money does not materialize, consumers are left with empty bank accounts and sometimes thousands of dollars of debt.

These schemes all have one thing in common: something must be purchased before work can begin – a website, customer leads, computer advertising, post cards, envelopes, craft supplies, video/audio tape recordings, etc.

### Warning Signs:

- The company emphasizes huge potential earnings for little to no effort, often using false testimonials by others who claim to have earned unbelievable profits.
- You have to pay up-front to begin work.
- The business does not have a physical location or the company representatives are unable to meet with you in person.
- High-pressure tactics are used to convince you to join the company or invest in the business opportunity.
- When you are not earning what you thought you would make, you are asked to invest more money in order to obtain higher returns.

# Protect Yourself:

- Avoid work-at-home jobs that charge an up-front fee.
- Be skeptical about claims regarding huge potential income.
- Check with the Arizona Secretary of State to ensure the business opportunity seller is registered as a telephonic seller.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau and read online reviews.
- Always do your research and ask questions before investing.
- Ask for information in writing.
- Meet personally with representatives of the company, view the physical location of the company, ensure all contact is traceable, and verify the actual earning potential of the business opportunity.
- Never invest more than you can afford to lose.
- Speak with a professional financial advisor or attorney before making any large investment.

## Resources:

### **Arizona Attorney General's Office**

[www.azag.gov/complaints/consumer](http://www.azag.gov/complaints/consumer)

Phoenix: (602) 542 - 5763, Tucson: (520) 628 - 6648  
or Toll-free: (800) 352 - 8431

### **Task Force Against Senior Abuse Helpline**

(602) 542 - 2124 or (844) 894 - 4735

### **Better Business Bureau**

(877) 291 - 6222 or [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)

### **Arizona Secretary of State**

602-542-4285 or [www.azsos.gov](http://www.azsos.gov)

[www.azag.gov/seniors/scamalert](http://www.azag.gov/seniors/scamalert)