

# New York

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## FBI New York Warns of Scams Targeting Timeshare Owners

James Smith, assistant director in charge (ADIC) of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, is warning the public that criminals across the country are scamming timeshare owners out of millions of dollars by promising to sell or rent unsuspecting victims' timeshares. Timeshare scams have been perpetrated for many years, targeting unsuspecting victims out of their hard-earned money.

In one common scam, timeshare owners receive unexpected or uninvited telephone calls or emails from criminals posing as sales representatives for a timeshare resale company. The sales representatives often use high-pressure sales tactics to add a sense of urgency to the deal. Timeshare owners who agree to sell are told they must pay an upfront fee to cover anything from listing and advertising fees to closing costs. Once the fee is paid, timeshare owners report the company becoming evasive - calls go unanswered, numbers are disconnected, and websites are inaccessible - or the company creates additional fees that victims must become evasive - calls go unanswered, numbers are disconnected, and websites are inaccessible - or the company creates additional fees that victims must pay before the real estate transaction becomes final.

In some cases, timeshare owners defrauded by a timeshare sales scam are subsequently contacted by a fraudulent timeshare fraud recovery company. The representative from the recovery company promises assistance in recuperating money lost in the sales scam. Some recovery companies require an up-front fee for services rendered. At times, scammers purport to be a government entity requesting payments for fees associated with the sale of the timeshare.

Once timeshare owners have given money to scammers, it's extremely difficult to get that money back; criminals will often immediately transfer their ill-begotten assets overseas.

To avoid timeshare frauds:

- Be cautious of uninvited telephone calls, texts, or emails from anyone interested in your timeshare.
- Scammers will use tactics such as high-pressure and time-sensitive offers; be wary of any offers that require an immediate response.
- Research all entities you are in contact with, contact offices independently to confirm if you are speaking to a representative of their company, and enlist the help of a real estate agent or lawyer you trust.

"Though timeshare scams have been perpetrated for many years, the consequences on the victims remain real and serious. Many of the scammers who commit timeshare fraud are well-practiced in their abilities to defraud unsuspecting customers. When opportunities appear 'too good to be true,' it's often because they are," said ADIC Smith. "Be sure to use caution when dealing with anyone who expresses interest in your timeshare. If you think you have been targeted by a timeshare scam, please report the incident. We are committed to protecting the community from these scams."

Report timeshare fraud scams via the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center ([ic3.gov](https://www.ic3.gov)), 1-800-CALL-FBI, or FBI New York at 212-384-1000.

Associated links:

- [FBI Los Angeles Raises Public Awareness About Elder Fraud, Announces Arrests Made This Week of Men Who Allegedly Targeted Elderly Victims in Timeshare Scheme – FBI](#)
- [Internet Crime Complaint Center \(IC3\) | Scammers Targeting Owners of Timeshares in Mexico](#)
- [Timeshares, Vacation Clubs, and Related Scams | Consumer Advice \(ftc.gov\)](#)
- [Internet Crime Complaint Center \(IC3\) | Home Page](#)

**TIMESHARE RESALE SCAMS**  
Own a timeshare? You could be the target of a timeshare resale scam.

**TIMESHARE QUICK FACTS**

- USUALLY CONDOS IN POPULAR VACATION SPOTS
- HIGH MAINTENANCE COSTS PLUS ANNUAL FEES
- HARD TO RESELL TOO MANY FOR SALE

**HOW A TIMESHARE RESALE SCAM WORKS**

- You own a timeshare. You want to sell it.
- You get a call from a company that offers to help ...
- ... but you need to pay money FIRST.
- You pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars.
- You find out there is no buyer, and you can't get your money back.

"We've got a buyer!"  
"FILING FEES"  
"CLOSING COSTS"

**NEVER PAY FOR A PROMISE**

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