



COLORADO
Department of Revenue
Division of Motor Vehicles

Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles | Fraud Resource Library for County Partners

Dear County Partners,

The Colorado Department of Revenue (DOR) Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Motor Vehicle Investigations Unit (MVIU) aims to educate the public about various types of fraud and scams. The state has tips to avoid becoming a victim of vehicle fraud and would appreciate your help in disseminating these messages statewide.

We've created this comprehensive document housing all of our avoiding fraud and scams campaign materials, so whether you're a local county partner or concerned member of the community, we hope to provide everything you need to support and amplify the DMV's efforts to protect residents.

Below, you'll find campaign-specific materials and resources, including key messaging, digital assets, social media content, and more. They're designed for ease of use and download to give all partners the tools to help prevent fraud in your communities.

Thank you for helping us promote these messages. Together, we can work toward a more secure and fraud-free Colorado.

Document Instructions

To best navigate this document, use the Quick Links feature below to jump to the desired campaign quickly. From there, you'll find campaign-specific resources, websites, and ready-to-share content.

Quick Links

[Buying and Selling a Vehicle](#)

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when Selling a Car](#)

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Buying and Selling a Vehicle

Help consumers steer clear of motor vehicle fraud by helping citizens recognize fraudulent activity. Motor vehicle fraud occurs when someone purchases a used vehicle and is misled about the car. Whether a seller withholds information about the vehicle's history or tampers with a VIN or license plates, it's important that customers understand their options and solutions.

Consumers should:

- **Check the title carefully:** Ensure the seller is the registered owner on the title, and that there are no discrepancies with the VIN.
- **Verify seller identity:** Ask for a driver's license and other forms of identification to verify the seller's legitimacy.
- **Run a vehicle history report:** Use a reputable service to check for any issues with the car's history, including potential title problems
- **Report suspicious activity:** If you suspect fraud, report the seller to the platform where you found the listing and contact local authorities.

Sellers should:

- **Provide the Colorado Certificate of Title.**
- **Keep the license plates.** These should be removed from the vehicle.
- **Provide an emissions inspection certificate.** This is only required if the buyer lives in an emissions area.

Additional Resources:

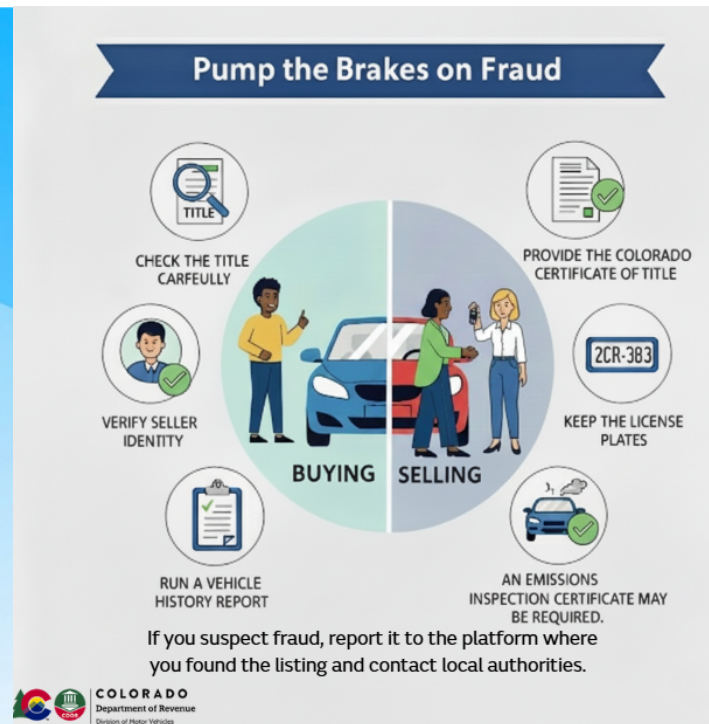
- [Buying and Selling a Vehicle](#)
- [10 Tips to Avoid Car Buying Fraud](#)
- [Importance of the seller removing the license plates](#)



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Social Media posts

You are welcome to share the following social media posts on your own platforms to help share the word. The Colorado DMV will use the hashtag #PumpTheBrakesOnFraud and “SteerClearOfFraud” to spread awareness. You can [download these graphics to accompany the templated captions below.](#)





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Facebook / Instagram

Be aware of Motor Vehicle Fraud when buying or selling a vehicle! Falling victim to fraud can happen to anyone. Always be on the lookout for the following:



Facebook / Instagram

- Damaged or salvaged titles
- Stolen or fraudulent plates
- Odometer fraud

Report fraudulent behavior by clicking on <https://dmv.colorado.gov/fraud>.

#PumpTheBrakesOnFraud

Steer clear of Motor Vehicle fraud when buying a vehicle! Follow these steps:

- **Check the title carefully:** Ensure the seller is the registered owner on the title, and that there are no discrepancies with the VIN.
- **Verify seller identity:** Ask for a driver's license and other forms of identification to verify the seller's legitimacy.
- **Run a vehicle history report:** Use a reputable service to check for any issues with the car's history, including potential title problems.
- **Report suspicious activity:** If you suspect fraud, report the seller to the platform where you found the listing and contact local authorities.

#PumpTheBrakesOnFraud #SteerClearOfFraud

Selling a car? Make sure that you know your responsibilities:

- Provide the Colorado Certificate Title
- The seller keeps the license plates. These should be removed from the vehicle.
- An emissions inspection certificate may be required if the buyer lives in an emissions area. Check out the Colorado DMV's Buying and Selling guidelines at <https://tinyurl.com/yc4jnr22>.



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Scam Text Messages

Scammers have frequently been impersonating the DMV, falsely claiming recipients have unpaid tickets and threatening severe consequences such as prosecution, suspension of vehicle registration, and revocation of driving privileges. These deceptive text messages are crafted to appear as official communications from the Colorado DMV. Their primary goal is to frighten recipients into clicking on malicious links and divulging personal or financial information under the guise of settling non-existent violations.

These claims are entirely false and designed to intimidate individuals into immediate compliance, and all Coloradans must understand that these messages are NOT from the Colorado DMV. The DMV does not initiate contact via unsolicited text messages to demand payment for tickets or to threaten prosecution or suspension of privileges in this manner.

Additional resource:

- [Colorado DMV Scam text news release](#)

Social Media Posts

Please help spread awareness about these scam texts! Counties are encouraged to post any of the following messages. You can [download these graphics to accompany the templated captions below.](#)



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These messages are *NOT* from the DMV

SCAM!

Colorado Department of Vehicles (DMV) Final Notice: Enforcement Penalties Begin on June 7. Our records show that as of today, you still have an outstanding traffic ticket. In accordance with North Colorado car State Administrative Code 15C-6.003, if you do not complete payment by June 6, 2025, we will take the following actions:

1. Report to the DMV violation database
2. Suspend your vehicle registration starting June 7

Recieve a text from the DMV? It's a scam!

The DMV does not initiate contact via unsoliciated text messages and emails to demand payment!

If you are concerned about the status of your driver's license, vehicle registration, or any potential tickets, contact the Colorado DMV directly through its official website at dmv.colorado.gov or by phone at (303) 205-5600. Do NOT use any contact information provided in the suspicious text.



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Facebook / Instagram

The Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles will **NEVER** send you a text asking for money or threatening fines.

If you receive a suspicious text message claiming to be from the DMV:

- **Do NOT** click on any links. These links often lead to fake websites designed to steal your information.
- **Do NOT** share any personal or financial information. This includes your driver's license number, Social Security number, credit card details, or banking information.
- **Do NOT** reply to the text message.

Stay alert! Don't fall for a fraudulent text!

While the exact wording can vary, these fraudulent texts typically:

- State they are from the "Colorado DMV" or a similar official-sounding entity.
- Allege outstanding unpaid tickets or violations.
- Threaten imminent legal action, such as prosecution.
- Warn of pending suspension of vehicle registration and/or driving privileges.
- Contain a link to a fake website to "resolve" the issue or make a payment.

Received a fraudulent text? We encourage you to report it to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov or the Federal Trade Commission at reportfraud.ftc.gov. Be sure to include the phone number or email that sent the message and the website linked in the text.



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Personal Identity Theft

Each year, millions of Americans fall victim to scams perpetrated from all over the globe. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) estimates that, last year alone, more than \$1.7 billion was lost due to fraudulent activity. While exact figures are not available, it is also estimated that fraud losses total in the hundreds of millions of dollars in Colorado alone.

Consumer education is the best weapon in the fight against fraud; therefore, being knowledgeable of the tactics used by scammers will greatly reduce the chances of becoming a victim.

How identity theft occurs:

- Scammers send fake emails (phishing), text messages (smishing), or make phone calls (vishing) pretending to be from legitimate companies to trick you into revealing personal information.
- Data breaches
- Malware
- Physical theft

Five tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Individuals should only carry necessary items in their purse or wallet.
- Shred all bills and records that are no longer needed that contain personal identifying information.
- Check Social Security records for unexplained earnings.
- Review their credit report for inconsistencies.
- Report lost or stolen documents.

Additional resources:

- [Colorado DMV Identity Theft and Fraud website](#)
- [Colorado Attorney General's Office](#)
 - Consumer Protection Section can be reached at 800-222-4444/720-508-6000
- [Federal Trade Commission \(FTC\)](#)
 - Consumer Response Center can be reached at 877-438-4338



Social Media Posts

Please help spread awareness about identity theft! You can [download these graphics to accompany the templated captions below.](#)

Top 5 Ways To Avoid Fraud

- Carry only those items needed in your purse or wallet.
- Shred all bills and records you no longer need that contain personal identifying information.
- Check your Social Security records for unexplained earnings.
- Review your credit report for unexplained earnings.
- Report lost or stolen documents.

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Don't Get Hooked!

How Identity Theft Occurs

- Scammers send fake emails (phishing), text messages (smishing), or make phone calls (vishing) pretending to be from a legitimate company to trick you into revealing personal information.
- Data breaches
- Malware
- Physical theft
- Skimming devices
- Social engineering



Are you a victim of identity theft?





Facebook / Instagram

What is identity theft?

When identity thieves steal or obtain Social Security cards and numbers, birth certificates, immigration documents, or other personal information that is unique to you. The thief can use this information to:

- Obtain a driver license or ID card.
- Open a bank account or credit card in your name.
- Purchase an automobile or real estate.
- Drain personal financial accounts.

Ways to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, Part 1:

- Carry only those items needed in your purse or wallet. Avoid carrying your Social Security card, birth certificate, blank checks, numerous credit cards, or a motor vehicle title.
- Check your driving record on an annual basis online at <https://dmv.colorado.gov/>
- Shred all bills and records you no longer need that contain personal identifying information.
- Check your Social Security records for unexplained earnings.
- Review your credit report for inconsistencies.



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Ways to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, Part 2:

- Report lost or stolen documents, such as a driver's license, ID card, or vehicle titles, to law enforcement officials.
- Place fraud alerts on your credit file to warn creditors not to open a new account until they contact you.
- Only shop on secure, well-known websites.
- Create strong passwords for websites.
- Never provide personal information over the phone.

If you believe Personal Identifiable Information has been compromised, the Colorado Motor Vehicle Investigations Unit has an investigative team that may be able to assist you with clearing your driving record and determining proper ownership of vehicles. For more information, please review the DMV's Identity Theft website. <https://tinyurl.com/3p7ussjw>



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Lost or stolen IDs

When an individual's ID is lost or stolen, it can be a stressful experience, but replacing a Colorado driver's license, ID card, or instruction permit is a straightforward process.

Checking the Status of the ID:

- If one did not receive their ID from the DMV within 30 days of issuance, check the status of the card on myDMV.colorado.gov.

Getting a Replacement:

- If a person's credential is **lost, stolen, or destroyed**, they can obtain a duplicate for a fee. However, if they do not receive their new credential in the mail, they may be eligible for a free duplicate. **To qualify, they must visit a state Driver License Office between 30 and 90 days after the original issue date.**

Reporting Theft:

- If an individual believes their driver's license or ID was stolen, they should file a report with their [local law enforcement agency](#).

If a person suspects their ID number is being misused, they should request a new one. They must complete the following steps and bring the documents to a Driver License office **in person** (documents should not be mailed, emailed, or faxed):

- File a police report with their [local law enforcement agency](#).
- Download and complete the [Affidavit of Colorado Driver License or Identity Theft](#) (DR 2153 Form).
- Have their signature on the form notarized.
- Bring these documents to any [Colorado Driver License office](#). These documents cannot be mailed, emailed, or faxed to the DMV.

Additional Resource:

- [Colorado DMV Lost or Stolen Documents website](#)



Social Media

You can [download these graphics](#) to accompany the templated captions below.

Stolen wallet?



- If you believe that your driver's license or ID was stolen, you should file a report with your local law enforcement agency. Find your local law enforcement agency at <https://www.usacops.com/co/>.
- You may qualify for a duplicate license or ID for a fee. To get a duplicate of your stolen credential, you will need to visit a driver license office. <https://dmv.colorado.gov/AppointmentScheduling>
- When scheduling your visit, you should select "Renew Colorado License/Identification card" as your appointment type.

Lost your wallet?

3 easy steps to replace your state ID



Check to see if you qualify for a duplicate license. A duplicate credential is a copy of your license, so it will have the same expiration date, class and endorsements as your previous credential.



Make an appointment online to visit a driver license office.
<https://dmv.colorado.gov/AppointmentScheduling>. When you schedule your visit, select "renew Colorado License/Identification card" as your appointment type



Go to the DMV.



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Lost Your ID?

To get a duplicate of your lost, stolen, or destroyed credential, visit a driver license office. Schedule an appointment at <https://dmv.colorado.gov/AppointmentScheduling>.

When scheduling your visit, select **"Renew Colorado License/Identification card"** as the appointment type. Don't forget to bring the necessary documents! Check out the DMV's Lost or Stolen documents page. <https://tinyurl.com/2p9r3vtt>

Reporting Theft

- If an individual believes their driver's license or ID was stolen, they should file a report with their local law enforcement agency. Find your local law enforcement agency at <https://www.usacops.com/co/>.



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The Importance of Removing Plates when Selling a Car

Sellers **should always** remove their license plates to avoid liability for future accidents, tolls, and crimes committed with the vehicle, as plates are tied to the registered owner. Leaving plates on the sold vehicle links it to the seller, allowing the seller to receive unexpected bills and potentially be investigated if the vehicle is used in a crime.

As long as sellers handle selling a car the way it's advised, for example, by retaining their plates, filling out the Report Release of Liability, and completing a Bill of Sale, they'll save themselves from potential trouble in the future. If sellers have any questions about selling a car, refer to the [Colorado DMV website](#).

What are the steps someone should take before selling their car, either to a private party, a dealership, or a junkyard?

- It is the seller's responsibility to provide the Colorado Certificate of Title, remove the license plates from the vehicle, complete an odometer disclosure statement, and, if required, provide an [emissions inspection certificate](#). If one is purchasing a vehicle from or selling a vehicle to another private party, the buyer needs a Bill of Sale. For more information on buying and selling a vehicle, please refer to the [DMV's website](#).

How should someone dispose of old license plates?

- Regular plates should be returned to the nearest [county motor vehicle office](#) or recycled with a recycling service that will take metal. Sellers with personalized plates may transfer their old plates to their next vehicle through their county motor vehicle office.

Additional Resource:

- [Importance of the seller removing the license plates](#)

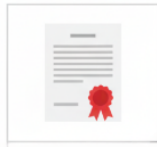
Social Media

You can [download these graphics](#) to accompany the templated captions below.



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Selling your car?



Provide the
title



Remove the
plates



Provide the
odometer
disclosure



Provide the
emissions
inspections
certificate



Provide the
bill of sale



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What to do with your old plates

Regular Plates



OR



Recycle OR Return to the
DMV Office

Personalized Plates



DMV Office



Transfer to
new vehicle



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Ensure that you no longer have any liability towards your sold car



Colorado Report of Release of Liability

Vehicle Information: _____

Make, Model, VIN: _____

Buyer Information: _____

Seller: ☐ _____

SUBMIT RELEASE OF LIABILITY



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Selling your car? Follow these steps:

- It is the seller's responsibility to provide the **Colorado Certificate of Title**, remove the license plates from the vehicle, complete an odometer disclosure statement, and, if required, provide an emissions inspection certificate. If one is purchasing a vehicle from or selling a vehicle to another private party, the buyer needs a Bill of Sale. For more information on buying and selling a vehicle, please refer to the DMV's website at dmv.colorado.gov/buying-and-selling.

Ensure that you don't have any liability towards your sold car!

- Sellers should remove the license plates from the car and fill out a state Report Release of Liability to voluntarily disclose an ownership transfer. Find the report on the following site: dmv.colorado.gov/buying-and-selling. The release serves to remove the seller's liability for the buyer's actions involving the vehicle after the sale is complete. Information entered into this system is available to law enforcement agencies.

Selling your car and no longer need your plates? Dispose of your plates the correct way!

- Regular plates should be returned to the nearest **county motor vehicle office** or **recycled with a recycling service that will take metal**. Sellers with personalized plates may transfer their old plates to their next vehicle through their county motor vehicle office. Find your local county motor vehicle office at <https://dmv.colorado.gov/county-offices>.



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Fake Emissions Tests

Many Coloradans need a passing emissions test to register a vehicle. However, if a fraudster fails their emissions test, they might purchase a fraudulent passing test online through a counterfeit website and take it to the county DMV to register their vehicle. When a customer passes an emissions test, it electronically sends a message to DRIVES.

Employees should be on the look out for:

- If the passing test is not in the DRIVES record and/or associated with the VIN of the vehicle.
- Any anomalies such as the font being inconsistent on the form.
- If the test numbers, VIN, or other vehicle identifying information appears to have been manipulated or altered.

If DMV employees do not see a passing test or suspect a test is fake, the employee should **turn away the customer and tell them to get retested through AirCare Colorado.**

Additional Resources:

- [AirCare Colorado](#)



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Social Media

You can [download these graphics](#) to accompany the templated captions below.



Help reduce vehicle pollution for a cleaner, healthier, and safer Colorado For All!





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Facebook / Instagram

Always make sure that you're getting your emissions test from a legitimate emissions testing company!

The Air Care Colorado Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program is a network of 18 vehicle emissions testing stations conveniently located throughout the Denver metropolitan and North Front Range areas. Additionally, 18 RapidScreen roadside emissions testing units are rotated among state-approved locations throughout the program area.

Visit aircarecolorado.com to find testing locations near you.

Help reduce harmful air pollution!

Get your emissions test to reduce harmful air pollution, protect public health from respiratory issues and other ailments, and combat climate change by limiting greenhouse gases.

Emissions tests also help ensure that vehicles are operating correctly by checking the onboard diagnostic (OBD) system, promoting overall vehicle safety and proper maintenance.



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Fake Government Websites

Customers should always be on the lookout for websites that are not affiliated with the Colorado DMV but provide DMV services to consumers. Look for sponsored advertisements and disclaimers at the top or bottom of the site that says they are not affiliated with any government agency.

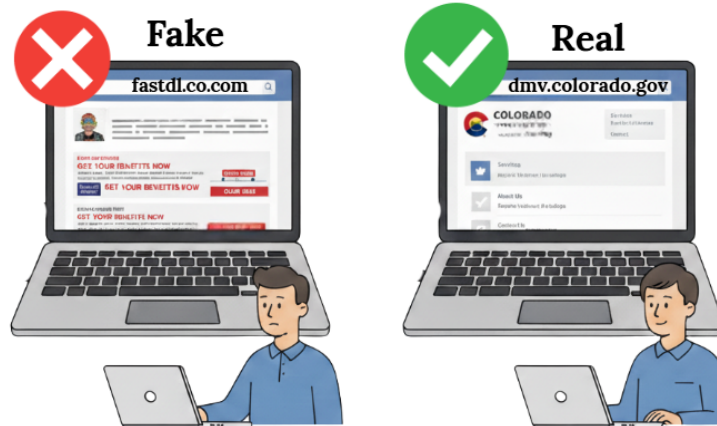
Always use the direct website, dmv.colorado.gov, when conducting DMV business.

Additional Resources:

- [Colorado DMV Fake Website, Fraud Alert info](#)
- [Watch out for fake DMV websites video](#)

You can [download these graphics](#) to accompany the templated captions below.

Always be alert for fake websites





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Facebook / Instagram

Renewing your license or registration? Ensure you're using the correct and official government website! The official Colorado DMV website has the following URL: dmv.colorado.gov.



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Additional Resources

Posters

County partners can now download posters that are based on the social media posts above. The posters can be found in [this Google Drive folder](#).

Media Contact Information

- Jennifer Giambi, DMV Communications Supervisor - Jennifer.Giambi@state.co.us
- Meishan Wright, DMV Marketing and Communications Specialist - Meishan.Wright@state.co.us

Sign up for the bi-monthly DMV Updates Newsletter

The Colorado DMV distributes a bi-monthly newsletter covering new business impacts, fraud watch, and the DRIVES Upgrade. [Click here to be added to our distribution list](#).

Additional Fraud Resources

Website	Purpose/Links	Notes
Pump the Brakes on Fraud Colorado	Fraud Prevention	Colorado-specific fraud awareness
10 Tips to Avoid Fraud	Consumer Protection	General advice for avoiding scams
American Association of Motor	Fraud Information	General fraud information



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Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA)	Training & Education	Fraud Detection & Remediation Training for professionals and law enforcement.
	Deterrence and Detection of Fraud Best Practices	
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)	Fraud Prevention (Vehicle odometer fraud)	Information on detecting odometer fraud
Federal Trade Commission - Consumer Advice (FTC)	Legal & Enforcement	State Enforcement Agencies for Odometer Fraud
	Consumer Protection	Advice on various consumer issues
	Fraud Prevention (ID)	Specific advice for REAL ID scams. Going to the DMV is the only way to avoid a REAL ID scam
	Unwanted Communication Prevention	How to stop spam and unsolicited messages, including unwanted calls, emails, and texts
	Report Fraud	Protect the community by reporting fraud, scams, and bad business practices
Department of Regulatory Affairs (DORA)	Consumer Protection	Website listing DORA's consumer topic areas (licensing, money, civil rights, etc.)
Department of Insurance (DOI)	Consumer Protection	Website listing what DOI regulates (health, auto, life, and title insurance)
Colorado Attorney General's Office	Protecting Consumers	Introductory info on the CO Department of Law
	Stop Fraud Colorado	An easy go-to resource that educates people on how to spot scams and fraud
	Fraud Center	Website listing different types of fraud and ways to learn more