

SAFETY FOR SENIORS

This section focuses on your physical and financial safety. It is important that you only share your personal information with a trusted source.

WA Police

WA Police Elder Abuse Protection Unit

Support

T: 08 9222 1618

W: <https://www.police.wa.gov.au/Your-Safety/Safety-for-seniors>

Safety for Seniors

Contrary to belief, seniors still only represent a very small percentage of crime victims.

Research has shown that those who appear confident and take security precautions are less likely to become victims of crime. By introducing a few common sense practises into your daily routine you can give yourself, your family, friends and neighbours a much greater peace of mind.

Safe & Found

Safe & Found WA is an initiative introduced by Western Australia Police Force (WA Police Force) and Australia Medic Alert Foundation.

Safe & Found supports people living with dementia or a cognitive impairment who might be at risk of becoming lost or reported as missing, by ensuring Police have immediate access to critical information to assist when undertaking search operations.

A detailed profile outlining your personal history and characteristics is completed ahead of time, and kept securely along with a recent photo, on the Safe & Found database for Police to access immediately if you go missing.

A Safe & Found ID bracelet is included with your membership to protect you when you're out in public. Your bracelet is engraved with the details needed to return you to safety should you appear lost or disoriented.

Read more on the Safe & Found website: <https://www.safeandfound.org.au/>

Safety Tips for Seniors

Home Security

- Ensure your house number is clearly visible
- Never tell anyone that you are at home alone for example trades or delivery people
- Trim trees and bushes to allow a clear view of your home (this will remove hiding places for possible offenders)
- Don't leave keys in obvious places, such as under pot plants or in the meter box
- Make sure handbags and wallets are not left in sight for example on bench tops or cupboards
- Install security screens and grilles
- Fit deadlocks and key locks to doors and windows
- Install motion sensor floodlights
- Think about installing an alarm system
- Get to know your neighbours, they can be your eyes and ears if you're not at home

Using Public Transport

- Travel with a friend
- Wait for transport in a well lit area close to other commuters
- Keep a current timetable to minimise time spent waiting
- Do not sit alone on buses or trains and be sure that you can be seen by the driver or other passengers
- Consider carrying a personal alarm
- Using your telephone
- The telephone is probably your most important means of communication, however there are some criminals in society that will use it to their advantage
- Always hang up on unwelcome callers
- Never give your name or address to unknown telephone callers
- Do not disclose that you live alone or that you may be away from your home
- Never disclose any personal or financial information
- Invest in an answering machine
- Consider changing your phone number to a silent or unlisted number

Safer Shopping

- Shop with friends whenever possible
- If you carry a purse or bag, hold it close to your body, tucked under your arm
- Always have a firm hold of your handbag or purse, don't leave it on shop counters or on the seat beside you on the bus or train
- Never leave your handbag in the shopping trolley
- Never carry large sums of money. Use EFTPOS or credit cards wherever possible
- Use an ATM in shopping centres not external ATMs
- Do not carry signed withdrawal forms with your bank book
- Always be aware of your surroundings

Related Links

Seniors and Elder Abuse website:

<https://www.police.wa.gov.au/Our-Community/Community-Diversity-and-Substantive-Equality/Seniors-and-Elder-Abuse>

Neighbourhood Watch

W: <https://www.nhw.wa.gov.au/>

Contact

Emergency 000

Police Assistance 131 444

Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000

Help for People with Disabilities website

<https://www.police.wa.gov.au/Our-Community/Community-Diversity-and-Substantive-Equality/People-with-Disability>

Accessible information

The WA Police Force ensures that information about police functions and services is available in alternative formats upon request.

Contact

WA Police Force Headquarters

2 Adelaide Terrace, Perth 6004

T: 08 9222 1618



Language and Communication Services

If you require an **AUSLAN interpreter** when talking to police, please ask, and you will be provided with one free of charge.

If you do not speak Auslan, English or your English is limited, again, an interpreter will be provided for you free of charge on request.

You can also contact a Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 or the WA Deaf Society on 08 9441 2677 (TTY: 08 9441 2655).

Department for Community Development - Seniors' Resources Online

W: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-communities/seniors-and-ageing>



ACCC SCAMWATCH Cyber Crime

Protecting yourself

Be wary of people you meet on social media or online dating sites who after just a few contacts profess strong feelings for you and try to move you away from the site and communicate via chat or email.

Be suspicious of unexpected emails or letters advising you how to claim an inheritance or competition prize. Never give out your personal details and seek advice from an independent professional.

Be suspicious of requests for money, even if they sound or look official. Government departments will never contact you asking for money upfront in order to claim a rebate.

Scammers will often ask you to use an unusual payment method, including preloaded debit cards, gift cards, iTunes cards or virtual currency such as Bitcoin.

Verify the identity of the contact by calling the relevant organisation directly – find them through an independent source such as a telephone book or online search. Do not use the contact details provided in the message sent to you.

Do not respond to telephone calls or emails offering financial advice or opportunities; just hang up or delete the email.

Always do your own research before you invest money and check the company or scheme is licensed.

Do not be pressured into making a decision. Scammers often try to create a sense of urgency through short deadlines, fake emergencies or threats of legal action.

Online Purchases - Know your Consumer Rights

The ACCC is also urging people to be aware of their consumer rights if something goes wrong, even if the item was purchased during the sales season.

Remember that you are entitled to consumer guarantees under the Australian Consumer Law, so if you have received a gift or purchased something in the sales and the product stops working or isn't as it was described, you are entitled to a remedy depending on the nature of the problem.

If you are having an issue with your product, you should first contact the retailer. They cannot refuse to help by sending you to the manufacturer. Your local state and territory consumer protection agency can provide more information about your rights, and may also be able to help negotiate resolutions between you and the seller.

Support

For more information regarding your Consumer Rights go to:

<https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers>

Door-To-Door and Home Maintenance Scams

Older Australians may also be more susceptible to door-to-door and home maintenance scams. While many legitimate businesses sell things door-to-door, scammers also use this approach. These types of scams generally involve promoting goods and services that are of poor quality, or not delivered at all.

Scammers may try and sell you gardening or roofing services and then bill you for additional work that you did not agree to. Sometimes they may pretend to conduct a survey so they can get your personal details, or to disguise their sales pitch until they have been talking to you for a while.

Some of the warning signs you may be dealing with a scammer include:

- They visit late at night, or visit you again after you have said 'no'
- They do not show you any identification or give you any contact information, written quotes or receipts
- They might demand that you decide to accept their offer on the spot
- You may be asked for a deposit or full payment and can only pay by cash or credit card
- They fail to tell you about your legal rights, including rights to a cooling-off period

If you have lost personal information and you are concerned your identity may be compromised, you can contact IDCARE for free support on 1800 595 160.

Consider contacting the platform on which you were scammed to report the scam: <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/get-help/where-to-get-help#report-scams-to-facebook-services>

If you or someone you know is experiencing anxiety, emotional concerns or distress about scams, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 24 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636

For more information: <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/news-alerts>

What to do - if you think you have been scammed

People who think they have been scammed should contact their bank or financial institution as soon as possible. They can also contact **IDCARE** on **1300 432 273** or via www.idcare.org if they suspect they are a victim of identity theft. **IDCARE is a free, government funded service that will support individuals through the process.**

