



Worrying findings published by TPR on pension scams

A new analysis conducted by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and The Pensions Regulator (TPR) has shown that victims of pensions scams could lose 22 years' worth of savings within 24 hours.

The new research reveals that 24% of people surveyed admitted to taking 24 hours or less to decide on a pension offer. 63% of those surveyed advised that they were confident to make a decision about their pension. However, worryingly, the same 63% would trust someone offering pensions advice out of the blue. **A main warning sign of a scam.** Therefore, overconfidence could also be leading savers to miss the signs of a scam.

Last year 180 people reported that they had been the victim of a pension scam, losing on average £82,000 each. The actual number of victims is likely to be much higher as scams often go unreported and those affected may not realise they have been scammed for several years.

Mark Steward, Executive Director of Enforcement and Market Oversight, FCA, said: *"We know many people have big plans for their retirement, whether it's seeing new places, learning new skills or helping their families out financially. Pension scammers destroy those dreams, often forever. So be ScamSmart. Reject unsolicited approaches offering 'help' with your pension and get advice from an FCA authorised firm before making big changes to your pension fund. Make sure your lifetime savings stay yours."*

Nicola Parish, Executive Director of Frontline Regulation, TPR, said: *"Pension scammers ruin lives, stealing away decades' of savings with professional-looking websites, 'expert' advice and an easy manner making it tough to spot the fraud. But once you sign on the dotted line, often there's no second chance. Scams can happen to anyone, so before making any decision about your pension, take your time, be ScamSmart and always check who you are dealing with."*

The regulators recommend four steps to protect yourself from pension scams:

1. Reject unexpected pension offers whether made online, on social media or over the phone.
2. Check who you're dealing with before changing your pension arrangements – check the FCA Register or call the FCA helpline on 0800 111 6768 to see if the firm you are dealing with is authorised by the FCA.
3. Don't be rushed or pressured into making any decision about your pension.
4. Consider getting impartial information and advice.

TPR recognises how devastating pension fraud can be, with victims being left facing retirement with limited income.

If you have any queries please contact your usual 44 Consultant or email admin@44benefits.co.uk

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