

SENIOR BRIGADE

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Protect Yourself: Home Repair & Equity Scams

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Protect Yourself: Home Repair and Equity Scams

- Recognizing scams

AWARE!

- Protecting yourself from fraud

AVOID!

- Steps to take if you become a victim

ACTION!



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Home Repair/Improvement Scams

- **Transient Work Crews**
 - Repave driveway.
 - Leftover materials.
 - Paint house.
 - Other home repair.



Home Repair/Improvement Scams

- **Free Inspections**
 - Pretend to find needed repairs.
 - Repairs are urgent.
 - Gain access to your home to steal.

Resist High-Pressure Sales Tactics

- If you are told that a deal is only available 'Now or Never', choose Never. Do not accept leftover materials.
- Michigan law gives you 3 days to cancel, without penalty or obligation, any contract solicited at your home.
- Beware of a contractor that only gives a post office box as an address.



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Check Contractor



- Get written estimates from several companies & compare costs, materials, and methods.
- Obtain and check references.
- Demand to see proof that the contractor is currently licensed and insured.



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Home Repair Payments



- Never pay for entire job in advance.
- Make scheduled payments as work progresses.
- A clear and detailed contract is essential.



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Home Improvement Loans

- **Use extreme caution if the suggestion is made to take out a home equity loan.**
 - How vital is repair?
 - Check with your credit union or bank. Do not sign a home equity loan offered by a contractor.



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Reverse Mortgage



- Loan against the equity in your home.
- You receive payment(s) that decrease the equity you have already built in your home.
- You remain the owner of the home.



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Reverse Mortgage

- Loan balance becomes due when you leave the home permanently.
- A substantial amount may be owed on a reverse mortgage when it ends and the only way to pay off the loan may be to sell the home.
- Companies prey on victims by selling unsuitable products.



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Foreclosure Scams



- Offer to refinance or modify your loan to make payments affordable but they take money up front and provide no services.
- Sign over deed to your home and pay rent. They claim that when debt is paid off, you will receive deed back.
- **This is a scam** – without the deed you do not own the home!



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Avoid Home Loan Scams

- **DON'T sign any documents without reading them first.** Many homeowners think that they are signing documents for a new loan when they are signing away their homes.
- Do not deed your property to anyone without consulting an attorney, a knowledgeable family member, a financial advisor, or someone else you trust.



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Avoid Home Loan Scams

- **Be sure your loan office is authorized to sell mortgages in Michigan.**
- **DON'T pay money to a foreclosure rescuer before any work has been done.**
- **DON'T ignore letters from your lender/loan servicer.** Contact your lender/loan servicer, as many are willing to work with homeowners who are behind on their payments.



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Avoid Home Loan Scams

- **DON'T pay your mortgage payments to someone other than your lender, even if he/she promises to pass the payment on to the lender.**
- **Once you have secured a loan, keep records of the payments you have made along with billing statements.**



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SeniorBrigade.com



SeniorBrigade
A MICHIGAN SENIORS WEBSITE

Providing valuable information and resources to Michigan seniors

Google™ Custom Search

Search

HEALTH CARE

FINANCIAL MATTERS

CONSUMER PROTECTION

VETERANS AFFAIRS

CONTACT US

Click to enlarge text size: **A A A**

Protect Yourself, Protect Your Future

Now more than ever, seniors need information to help them with financial and health care decisions, and that will protect them against scam artists and predators. Nationwide, as many as 5,000,000 seniors fall victim to financial abuse each year.

This website is a clearinghouse for helpful information on consumer protection, financial matters, health care issues and veterans' services. It provides links to a wide variety of state and federal programs to help make informed decisions that can benefit you and your family.



Click here to watch Mike Cox's video message

The Senior Brigade also features a statewide calendar of events, sorted by

Senior Events Calendar

S	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	



REGISTER ONLINE

Receive FREE Senior Brigade programming at your location.



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SeniorBrigade.com

[Click here to watch Attorney General Cox's video message.](#)

SENIORBRIGADE GUIDE

A printable brochure for Michigan Seniors to assist them with issues regarding Consumer Protection, Financial Matters and Health Care.

Click here for a [text only version](#).



MICHIGAN ATTORNEY GENERAL

A direct connection to Michigan's Chief Law Enforcement Officer



LOW PRICE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

A site to search more than 150 commonly prescribed drugs in Michigan for the lowest possible price. Searchable by zip code, city, or pharmacy.



CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR

Michigan House of Representatives and Senate websites provide assistance in locating and contacting a Representative or Senator by county, district number or name.

Immediately report it to one of the consumer reporting companies: Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; Experian 1-888-397-3742; or TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289.

The company you call is required to contact the other two companies. Also visit www.ftc.gov/idtheft for other tips.

> [Click here to see more QuickTips.](#)



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