



# TIPS FOR AVOIDING VETERANS SCAMS



## ★ **Protect Yourself – Ask Questions**

How do I know the veterans’ advocate I am working with is credible?

- Only work with VA-accredited representatives on this searchable database of attorneys, claims agents, and veterans service organizations: [www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation](http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation).
- Accredited veterans’ advocates will be able to present you with proof of their accreditation – **Ask for it.**
- Never feel pressured to work with a veterans’ advocate.
- If they claim they are with a nonprofit group, research their organization.

## ★ **Be in charge and in control of the situation** – Be wary of a veterans’ advocate who contacts you unsolicited. This should be a decision where **you** are seeking **their** assistance.

## ★ **Services should be free** – Never spend any money until all other options are exhausted.

Things to Remember:

- Be suspicious of veterans’ advocates who ask for personal or financial information including Social Security numbers, driver’s license information, and banking or credit accounts, through unsolicited phone calls or visits.
- Know that official VA information will always be sent to you by US mail.
- Only scammers charge for services like accessing pension or obtaining military records.
- The Veterans Benefits Administration has the ultimate authority to deny or approve submitted claims.
- For more information about VA pension eligibility requirements, visit [www.benefits.va.gov/pension](http://www.benefits.va.gov/pension) or call **1-800-827-1000** or contact your state’s Veterans Affairs office: [www.nasdva.us/Links.aspx](http://www.nasdva.us/Links.aspx).

## ★ **When in Doubt, Reach Out!** There are credible organizations that are willing to provide you with information, resources and guidance.

Report suspicious solicitations or fraudulent activities to:

- State Attorney General’s Office: [www.naag.org/naag/attorneys-general/whos-my-ag.php](http://www.naag.org/naag/attorneys-general/whos-my-ag.php)
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC): <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov>
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: [www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov) or **1-855-411-CFPB (2372)**
- Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General (OIG) hotline: [www.va.gov/oig/hotline](http://www.va.gov/oig/hotline), [vaighotline@va.gov](mailto:vaighotline@va.gov), or **1-800-488-8244**
- National Elder Fraud Hotline, U.S. Department of Justice: **1-833-372-8311**

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National Center on Elder Abuse

For additional information and resources please contact the National Center on Elder Abuse at <https://ncea.acl.gov> or **1-855-500-3537**

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