

# Romance scams

## Definition of romance scam

A romance scam is the extortion of money and property through a fake emotional and romantic relationship initiated virtually by a scam artist.

## STRATEGY

### The scammer:

- Makes contact with the victim via social networks or dating sites using a fake profile.
- Sends a message with a first name that doesn't match, or supposedly official documents containing spelling mistakes.
- Identifies themselves as being of high social status, prestigious, charismatic or in a position of authority.
- Proposes to continue communicating via other means, outside the dating site, using a private or different communication method (e-mail, text messaging, WhatsApp, Google Hangouts, etc.).
- Is travelling or living abroad, but would like to come visit you.
- Always finds good reasons or excuses for not meeting by camera or in person.
- Once they've established trust with you, they'll bring up unusual financial difficulties to ask for money: a blocked account at a financial institution, a stolen cell phone or computer, illness of a loved one, trouble with the law, an accident, etc.
- The amounts of money requested are minimal at the start, and gradually increase over time.

If you refuse to provide money, threats and intimidation will often be used to coerce payment.

## YOUR RESOURCES

- In the event of a suspected scam, you can contact your local police station (PDQ) by calling **514 280-01XX** (with XX being the number of your PDQ). For emergencies, call **911**.
- Contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre to **report** scams by calling 1-888-495-8501 or directly on their website at [antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca](https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca).
- Whether or not you file a complaint with the police, you have the right to obtain the services of the Crime Victims Assistance Centres (CAVAC). Call 514 277-9860, or visit our website at [cavac.qc.ca](https://cavac.qc.ca) for more information.
- To file a complaint anonymously and confidentially, call Info-Crime Montréal at 514 393-1133.

## PREVENTION TIPS

- **Stay alert** on the various dating sites or social networks
- **Be wary** if someone initiates the first contact
- **If you have any doubts**, check it out with someone you trust
- **Never transfer** money or assets to someone you only know virtually
- Keep your conversations on **official platforms**
- **Don't make your bank account accessible to your love interest** to make financial transactions