

Attorney Impersonation Scams Are Increasing: What You Need to Know

A growing scam is targeting individuals seeking legal help by impersonating licensed attorneys. These schemes are becoming more sophisticated and harder to detect, and they can have serious consequences for victims.

How the Scam Works

Fraudsters are pulling attorney names and credentials from publicly available sources and using that information to pose as legitimate legal professionals. By referencing real attorney details, they create a convincing appearance of credibility.

In some situations, the real attorney is unaware their identity is being used until someone contacts them directly to verify representation.

Scammers have gone as far as:

- Setting up video calls with professional-looking backgrounds
- Using recognizable logos to appear affiliated with established organizations
- Creating business profiles on messaging platforms

These tactics are designed to build trust quickly and pressure individuals into paying for services that are never actually provided.

Where These Scams Are Happening

Most of these interactions take place through:

- WhatsApp
- Facebook
- TikTok
- Other social media or messaging platforms

They often begin with **unsolicited contact**, which is an important red flag.

Who Is Being Targeted

These scams frequently target individuals who may already feel vulnerable, including those:

- Facing urgent legal issues
 - Dealing with language barriers
 - Unsure how to verify legitimate legal services
 - Navigating immigration-related concerns
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Potential Consequences

The impact can go far beyond financial loss.

There have been reports of individuals experiencing serious legal consequences after relying on fraudulent services, including missed deadlines or improperly handled filings. In some cases, this has led to significant complications in legal matters.

How to Protect Yourself

If you are contacted by someone claiming to be an attorney:

- Be cautious of **unsolicited outreach**, especially through social media or messaging apps
- Independently verify the attorney through **official State Bar directories**
- Contact the attorney directly using publicly listed contact information
- Be wary of requests for **immediate payment or unusual payment methods**

Taking a few extra steps to verify can help prevent serious issues.

Reporting Concerns

If you believe you or someone you know may have encountered this type of scam, consider reporting it to the appropriate authorities and seeking guidance from a qualified professional.

Finally, if you're aware of this scam or know someone whom it's affected in Arizona, please let them know by emailing sba.communications@staff.azbar.org and alerting federal authorities at coir.fraud.program@usdoj.gov.

Final Thoughts

These scams are designed to look legitimate. Taking the time to verify who you are working with is one of the most effective ways to protect yourself.

If something feels off, it's worth pausing and confirming before moving forward.