



PUPPY SCAMS

SA Police has seen a recent increase in fraudulent advertisements for puppies online. Scammers' tactics are extremely sophisticated which often leaves even the most vigilant people out of pocket. Here are some tips you can follow to ensure you don't fall victim:

- Verify if the breeder's website or social media profile is legitimate. You can do this by checking when the person joined. Be cautious of any newly created profiles showing limited history.
- Perform a location search of the breeder's address. If an address is not revealed it could be a fraudulent business. Breeders are required to have a kennel address as their facilities need to be inspected, regulated and approved by authorities.
- Trust approved and regulated services. Dogs SA provide a free Breeder Directory of approved and accredited breeders. Approved breeders are reputable and will raise dogs in accordance with national standards.
- Compare pricing because 'if it's too good to be true, it probably is'. Dogs SA often provide an average selling price for breeds.
- Request a financial breakdown of services required. Experienced breeders are able to do this by providing vaccination, shipping, insurance and customs information. You should request invoices and ABN details.
- Perform a search of the BSB provided by the seller as it can reveal where the account was created. Use caution when transferring to bank accounts that have been created online as they often involve victims of identity theft.
- Be aware of grammar, sentence structure and spelling as it is often incorrect or rigid. Email responses from scammers are also often impersonal and generic in nature in an attempt to replicate a legitimate business.
- Ask to view photos or videos of the puppy's life and ongoing photos or videos if the puppy is still in the breeder's care. Scammers often use stock or copied images from other breeder websites and as a result there will be an internet footprint of the image previously existing. Perform a reverse image search to check whether the puppy's photo has been copied from other places on the web. Guidance on reverse image searching is available on police.sa.gov.au/scams.
- Be aware of emotional manipulation. Scammers will appeal to a victim's emotional conscience to coerce further payment. Remember, breeders love their animals and would not risk untoward harm to them for financial gain.

For more online safety and scam awareness information visit police.sa.gov.au/scams. Report all scams to cyber.gov.au/report.

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