

FraudSMART.

Informed. Alert. Secure.

Avoid Student Rental Scams

As you start to look for accommodation for the college year or for summer trips don't be tricked into paying a deposit for a property that does not exist or has already been rented, often to multiple people.

Be Informed

- Do your homework – familiarise yourself with the average rent price in your search area. If the rent is unusually low and it seems too good to be true, it usually is!
- Use online maps to double-check that the property being advertised actually exists and is at the stated address.
- Check short-term rental sites to ensure the property is not being used by a fraudster for “viewings” who will take your deposit money.
- Don't hand over any money until you have seen the property and are happy with its condition. Once satisfied use a cheque or bank draft to pay the deposit.

Be Alert

- Don't make any payments until you have been given the keys and signed the rental contract. Always check that the keys fit in the lock.
- Remember, don't transfer any money unless you have carried out all the relevant checks and you are absolutely sure that the listing is genuine.
- Don't be embarrassed if you have been scammed. Report it to your local Garda Station and contact your bank.

Be Secure

- Keep copies of all correspondence between yourself and the advertiser, including bank details and the advertisement itself.
- Use legitimate well-known rental agencies where possible.



Banking & Payments
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Students a key target for Money Muling

Money mules are people recruited by fraudsters to help transfer stolen money from bank accounts.

Fraudsters recruit money mules by:

1. Targeting students and offering money in return for lodging cash/cheques into a bank account, often using the excuse that they cannot open an account themselves.
2. Posing as employers with job vacancies such as work-from-home and quick cash jobs often advertised through social media.

Be Informed

- Research any work-from-home opportunities to ensure the business is legitimate.
- Verify a company by checking its contact details and calling its landline.
- Never accept payment for use of your bank accounts.

Be Alert

- Be wary of any approaches or opportunities to make easy money.
- Be particularly cautious of offers from people or companies overseas as it is difficult to verify their legitimacy.
- Be wary of any work-from-home jobs that overpay you and ask you to return the overpayment. If it was paid to you by cheque make sure the cheque has cleared fully before transferring any money, check with your bank to make sure.

Be Secure

- Never give your bank account details to anyone unless you know & trust them.
- Never allow your bank account to be used by someone else.
- If you have been approached to act as a money mule or have been a victim of this type of crime, report it to your local Garda Station and contact your bank.

Warning: Being a 'Money Mule' is a criminal offence under the Criminal Justice (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing) Act 2010 and it can carry up to 14 years imprisonment.

FraudSMART is a fraud awareness initiative developed by Banking & Payments Federation Ireland (BPF) and its member banks. It is supported by An Garda Síochána.