

BBB Fraud Watch Protecting Yourself From Immigration Scams

By: Better Business Bureau Serving Greater Cleveland

There can be a lot of paperwork involved when trying to get a green card, visa, or full citizenship in the United States. Scammers know that this process takes time and can be confusing and target these individuals.

There are multiple versions of immigration scams. In one case, the scammer calls pretending to be a U.S. government employee. They state that you owe unpaid taxes and must pay or be arrested and/or deported.

In another version, the scammer pretends to be someone qualified to give legal advice, like a lawyer or government official. The scammer offers to help you file immigration paperwork and prepare for immigration interviews. However, they do not have any legal qualifications to offer advice and may charge for information that is false, misleading, or available for free from other sources.

Finally, scammers may post fake websites that look very similar to government immigration websites. These fake websites charge for filling out forms or paperwork that you can get for free from www.uscis.gov, the official U.S. Immigration Services website. Scammers make websites with similar URLs. Make sure you are on the correct site before you give personal information or money.

One consumer reported falling for a fake government website scam. The victim went to a

website that looked similar to the official site and was asked to pay \$299.00 before accessing any immigration forms. The victim paid but later realized they could get the same paperwork for free from the official U.S. Immigration Services website. However, by that time, their money was already lost to the scammer. The victim said, "Their website looked so real that any immigrant would be fooled to pay not knowing any better."

To protect you from immigration scams, Better Business Bureau offers the following tips:

Never pay for blank government forms. Government forms are free, though you may have to pay when you submit them.

Get immigration information from U.S. government websites. Some scammers set up websites that look like they are run by the government, but they aren't. Make sure you are on the official U.S. Immigration Services website: www.uscis.gov.

Beware of businesses or individuals who guarantee they can get you a visa, green card or employment authorization document. Also, be cautious of people who claim to have special connections to U.S. Immigration Services.

Don't let anyone keep your original documents. Scammers may try to keep your birth certificate or passport and make you pay to get them back.

Be cautious of ads claiming to better your chances in the diversity lottery. Print and popup ads online may promise to improve your chances of

winning a visa by paying a fee. Paying this fee will not actually increase your chances of winning.



BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Read Fraud Alerts
读者欺诈警报

File Complaints
档案投诉

Find Trustworthy Businesses
寻找值得信赖的企业

Submit Customer Reviews
提交客户评论

BBB.ORG



Recognizing the hard work of Cleveland's young entrepreneurs.

The BBB Spark Award is bestowed upon entrepreneurs age 35 and younger whose new businesses are less than three years old and demonstrate Character, Culture and Community.

Through an easy application process, young business owners who demonstrate these characteristics can apply for a Spark Award on our website. Consumers and businesses can also nominate a business they feel is actively working to maintain an ethical marketplace while connecting with its community. Businesses who are nominated will still need to complete the application process.

Completed applications are due on November 18, 2019.

The Spark Award will be chosen from a panel of judges who represent the Greater Cleveland business community. Three leading organizations are then selected to represent the Class of 2020 in the areas of character, culture and community.

LaunchHouse Logo

Two finalists and a winner will be announced in mid-December, 2019. The winner will be recognized at the LaunchHouse Bootstrap Bash, presented by LaunchHouse and the Cleveland Jewish News, on January 25, 2020 at Red Space. Additionally, recipients will also be recognized at BBB's Celebration of Integrity, in April 2020.

The winner of the Spark Award will re-

About the Spark Awards

ceive a \$2000 cash prize! Finalists for the Spark award will also receive a one-year Flex Membership to LaunchHouse.

The Spark Awards applications will be judged based on the following: character, culture, and community.

Character

Transformative Leadership

Leaders must be teachable and open to growing with ideas. The journey to wisdom does not have one path, but many paths to be explored when a person desires to exhibit strong ethics. Leaders habitually seek the truth, are open to criticism, and know that their own personal development is never complete. Ethical maturity cultivates an environment that promotes higher standards of better business practices and a mutual understanding that each employee has control over their own character.

Culture

Reinforce and Unite the Team of Treasured Employees while Steering Performance to Mission

Purposeful teams have clear visions while being honest and transparent with their members. Beneficial workplace cultures help teams work toward their goals and establish guidelines that hold each member, including leadership, accountable while praising valuable team players. As a result, successful teams are able to create structures, adapt to change, and continually encourage opportunities for all staff members. Progressive cultures set ethical ways for a business to problem solve, resolve conflict, and inspire evolution.

Community

Enthusiastically Give Back!

Admirable entrepreneurial organizations show appreciation for their communities by enthusiastically giving back. Businesses should eagerly support their communities by contributing to their industry membership standards organizations, and encouraging an ethical marketplace.

Community-inspired businesses help their environment, stakeholders and community membership by reinvesting and volunteering.

Questions?

Contact Pam Anson at 216.413.5232 or email her at pam@cleveland.bbb.org.



APPLY NOW!
TRUST STARTS WITH A SPARK

BBB spark award

The BBB Spark Award recognizes entrepreneurs 35 and younger whose new business is less than three years old.

The winner will receive a \$2,000 cash prize!

Apply or Nominate a Business!

DEADLINE TO APPLY: NOVEMBER 18, 2019

警惕! 又有華裔家庭被盜



(本報訊)近日,陸續聽到有華裔家庭被盜事件發生。以前華裔家庭遭遇入室盜竊也時有發生,基本上都在中國城附近。相比于郊區,克利夫蘭中心一帶原本治安就差一些,可最近兩周內,在克利夫蘭郊區城市也發生類似案件。有一位群友好心把自己所知道的發在微信群里,以引起華裔家庭的重視,本報轉錄于此,以警醒華

裔家庭妥善保管貴重物品,家中不要存放現金,看護好自己的家園,維護好全家人辛苦勞作的成果。同時本報也對這位熱心的群友表示感謝。

錄如下:“說過 Solon 一家朋友周末被入室盜竊。昨晚我們住在 Strongsville 的朋友家被盜,時間在他們外出吃飯的 5:30-8:30pm 之間,住在同一小區的另一家中國朋友家也差一點點被盜,那家朋友在去 Columbus 的途中,家里只有上高中的兒子在家,家里沒開燈,幸虧那家朋友有裝攝像頭,盜賊當時把攝像頭拔下,但他們設置的警鈴大作,同時也傳信息給那家主人,他們趕緊讓兒子把燈打開,把門關緊同時打電話給警察局,那二盜賊沒能進屋。現在從鏡頭里看到是二白人。昨晚第一家損失慘重,現在還沒抓到嫌犯。以後家里值錢的東西都要分開放,晚上後院的燈要開着,不知道是專盯中國家庭還是隨意,以後大家都要小心為好。”

