

Beware of fake websites and impostors claiming to be lawyers

Avoid phony inheritance scams
that could steal your money

Mass audience makes cons a big business

- Fraud and con artists have been with us since humans first acquired speech
- Modern technology lets them reach a mass audience
- Don't become one of their victims

The inheritance scam

- Fraudster claims to be a lawyer who has custody of unclaimed inheritance, bank account, or proceeds of life insurance
- He says the owner had the same last name as you, and wants you to pretend to be related

Drawing the victim into fraud

- Anybody who pretends falsely to be a relative to claim an inheritance is himself committing a crime
- Most people would realize that this is wrong or unbelievable, but every year there are some who fall for it
- Older people slipping into dementia are particularly vulnerable

Example of a fraudulent fax

- Fraudster writes to the victim pretending to be a lawyer:

Since you share the same last name and nationality with the deceased, I can use a legal means to present/introduce you as the Legal Beneficiary of the deceased estate given the access to quality information available to me. Hence, I solicit for your consent to partner with me for the claim of this policy benefit as the beneficiary of the claim, if you consent to the above request, all proceeds will be processed on your behalf. With your approval, I propose the sharing of the proceeds as follows: 45% each and 10% to charity organizations.

This transaction is 100% risk free as there will be no violation of any civil or criminal laws. I have all the necessary documentation to expedite the process in a highly professional manner. I will provide all the relevant documents to substantiate your claim as the beneficiary, and it may take up to thirty (30) working days from the date of receipt of your consent.

Kindly note that this transaction is strictly confidential and shall not be shared with a third party without my approval. Many thanks for considering my request and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Please contact me via ([redacted]@gmail.com and cc: [redacted]@gmail.com) or
Phone: +1-613-[redacted]

Your earliest response to this matter would be greatly appreciated.

[redacted] LL.B,LL.M

Attorney

What the con men want

- The fake lawyer will tell you that you need to make a large payment up front to claim your inheritance
- You will be asked to send thousands of dollars, often through an untraceable payment scheme such as Western Union or bitcoins

Wire transfers to banks

- Even a wire transfer to the account of a law firm at a bank may not be safe
- Sophisticated con artists sometimes fool banks with fake ID to set up bank accounts in false names
- They quickly withdraw the money sent by the victim, and then disappear

Don't be fooled by their website

- The latest slick move by the con men is to set up a real looking website that they refer you to
- This makes it seem like they are a real law firm
- They steal bios and photos of real lawyers from real law firms, and substitute their own phone number and email address

Because everybody trusts Canadians

- Con targeting the US often claims to be a Canadian lawyer
- The con steals a copy of the Canadian's website to make himself more convincing
- He sets up the fake law firm at a new web address: <https://avoidaclaim.com/2020/firm-websites-being-impersonated-by-fraudsters/>

Any fraudster can buy a website for about \$10

Buy a domain and everything else you need

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DOMAIN

C\$7.66/yr

Instead of C\$30.72/yr

[Get offer →](#)

91% off

.XYZ

DOMAIN

C\$1.28/yr

Instead of C\$13.94/yr

Yes, sometimes a real lawyer may contact you

- If you really did have a long-lost relative who died and left you something, a genuine unfamiliar lawyer may contact you
- About as likely as winning the lottery
- If you have reason to wonder whether it's genuine, check with the law society or state bar association where the lawyer is located
- Only respond to a lawyer whose contact information can be verified from that source

Never send money

- If a deceased relative left you something, the taxes, fees and expenses will normally be paid out of the estate
- You should never need to send money to a lawyer to claim a legitimate inheritance

Report a con to the authorities

- In the United States, wire fraud and internet fraud are federal felonies, with punishment up to 20 years imprisonment. You can report it to the FBI,
<https://www.ic3.gov/Home/ComplaintChoice/default.aspx>
- In Canada, report it to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, which operates in collaboration with the RCMP,
<https://www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/terms-avis/index-eng.htm>

Thank you.

For assistance with all estate law matters in Ontario,
you may contact Rogerson Law

<https://www.rogersonlaw.com/estate-lawyers/>

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