

Better Business Bureau® Senior Awareness Initiative
**Homeowners Alarmed by Misleading
Home Warranty Mailing**



Local consumers have alerted Better Business Bureau® Serving Greater Cleveland (BBB®) that they have received alarming notices in the mail regarding expiring home warranties. The notices vary in style, but the messages are the same. They contain language urging the recipient to "call IMMEDIATELY" and that the letter is a "FINAL ATTEMPT TO NOTIFY." The letter states, "Without a home warranty in place, you are at risk of being financially liable for any and all repairs." These mailings, designed to resemble correspondence from a current mortgage holder, are direct mail advertising pieces. Some include official-looking "Registration Fee" vouchers, which have misled consumers into thinking they were dealing with their actual home warranty provider.

A South Euclid consumer reported he lost \$195.00 after receiving a postcard in the mail. He told BBB he signed up for a "home warranty with the business not knowing it was a scam." Another consumer from Bedford Heights contacted BBB after he received one of these advertising pieces and had a similar story. He told BBB he "received a one-page letter with no business address information, on the sent envelope or the letter itself, other than a name, 'Home Warranty Dept'...On the top of the letter was a Registration Fee Voucher...I called the phone number and talked to a representative who informed me 'All homes have warranties.'" The consumer told the representative that he knew he had a warranty through another company and he wasn't sure about this particular warranty. The representative told him the home warranty renews every three years, wished him the best of luck, and hung up.

BBB has linked some of these misleading mailings to a business named "[Home Warranty Division](#)" based in Clearwater, Florida. This business currently has an "F" rating with the BBB due to concerns with the business's practices, the number of complaints the business has received, and the length of time the business has been operating. BBB has been unable to determine the business's physical location and advises people to use caution when dealing with businesses that do not disclose their physical address.

Legitimate home warranties typically cover repairs to major appliances or home systems such as plumbing, electrical, and HVAC. These plans, varying in coverage, are often encountered during home purchases. Consumers can choose to buy plans for new constructions or aging homes. Importantly, home warranties are managed by third-party companies, not local governments. Consumers will never receive mailings from county or state officials regarding expiring home warranties. It is advisable for consumers to contact their current home warranty provider with any questions and to disregard such notices.

For more information about purchasing a home warranty, [visit BBB.org](#). **Have additional questions?** Reach out to your BBB at **216.241.7678** or mybbb@cleveland.bbb.org. **Have a scam to report?** Report it to [BBB.org/ScamTracker](#)

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Cryptocurrency Recovery Services Often Scam Themselves



Consumers duped by cryptocurrency ("crypto") scams often face staggering losses. In 2021, [the average reported loss was around \\$8,000](#), but some individuals reported losing their entire life savings to fake crypto investment schemes. Worse still, victims of these scams are at risk of further fraud when they turn to "cryptocurrency recovery services." Unfortunately, many of these services are scams themselves.

Cryptocurrency recovery companies that request upfront fees to recover lost cryptocurrency are scams. Very few legitimate companies will offer to help with technology, data recovery, or account-specific issues, but these companies cannot recover stolen funds themselves. Typically, only banks and financial institutions can reverse charges and recover funds in certain crypto-related scenarios.

Scammers may even pose as law enforcement or other government officials. Legitimate government resources will never ask for money or charge fees to help a consumer obtain a crypto refund. Government agencies cannot guarantee refunds either. In limited circumstances, some government agencies, like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), may be interested in attempting to recover funds through their Financial Fraud Kill Chain (FFKC) process which aids in recovering large international wire transfers stolen from US citizens.

Since cryptocurrency scams are now [considered the riskiest scam type](#), [BBB Cleveland](#) is providing the following tips on handling losses and identifying crypto recovery scams.

Report Cryptocurrency Scams Immediately - Contact your bank to reverse unauthorized transactions and report the scam to local police, the [FBI](#), and the [Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC). Additionally, file a report with the Better Business Bureau (BBB) at www.bbb.org/scamtracker.

Don't Trust Communications Guaranteeing a Refund - Most money lost in cryptocurrency scams cannot be recovered. Any entity promising a guaranteed refund is likely a scammer.

Beware of Fake Recovery Checks - Scammers might issue fake checks that exceed the lost amount and ask victims to return the "overpayment." These checks will bounce, causing further financial loss.

If you encounter a scam, whether or not you've lost money, report it to BBB's Scam Tracker at www.bbb.org/scamtracker.

Better Business Bureau® Senior Awareness Initiative BBB Launches New Scam Survival Toolkit



Better Business Bureau® (BBB®) marked the very first “National Scam Survivor Day” this summer by [launching a new online resource](#) aimed at helping people whom scams have impacted. BBB’s Scam Survival Toolkit, which can be found on the homepage of [BBB Scam Tracker](#), provides tailored guidance and resources based on a person’s specific situation. It includes steps victims should take to prevent further financial impact and guidance for restoring their long-term financial and emotional well-being. Users will also be connected to the [BBB Scam Prevention Guide](#) to provide them with the knowledge they need to spot future scam attempts.

“We are immensely grateful for all the brave consumers who have come forward to BBB to share their experience with scams over the years. These stories help educate others on how to avoid scams while putting a very human perspective on just how easy it is to fall victim to them” said Sue McConnell, President of BBB Serving Greater Cleveland. “Scam victims not only have to deal with the financial ramifications but also need to take care of their mental and emotional well-being. It’s a side many don’t think about and we hope the [BBB Scam Survival Toolkit](#) connects with survivors in a meaningful and impactful way.”

The Scam Survival Toolkit can be accessed at [BBB.org/ScamSurvivalKit](#). BBB’s Scam Tracker, an online scam reporting tool, can also be accessed at [BBB.org/ScamTracker](#). BBB recommends consumers report scams, regardless of whether or not they have lost money, to Scam Tracker to help prevent others from falling from similar scams.

Consumers can file a complaint at [BBB.org/Complaint](#). **Have additional questions?** Reach out to your BBB at **216.241.7678** or mybbb@cleveland.bbb.org. **Have a scam to report?** Report it to [BBB.org/ScamTracker](#).



You’ve been scammed, and you don’t know what to do.

BBB’s Scam Survival Toolkit can help.

Get your personal recovery plan today:
[BBB.org/ScamSurvivalKit](#)

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