

COMMUNIQUÉ

Scam Activities-Unlawful transactions

Amongst the ongoing concerns about the spread of COVID-19 and the impact thereof, the Financial Services Commission (“Commission”) is closely monitoring the financial non-banking sector in order to sanction any suspicious or fraudulent activity that may be undertaken in the sector.

An event such as the COVID-19 pandemic, can lead to new types of scam activities.

Scams can be very sophisticated and nuanced and therefore the Commission urges the public at large to be vigilant and on the look-out for scams that could appear over the coming months.

Scammers are opportunistic and will try to get personal details or money from members of the public in many ways to raise funds. They may seek to use the current global pandemic to appeal to the good nature and sense of responsibility of members of the public or they may fraudulently offer high returns on investments.

Some examples of scam activities inter alia include:

- **Exploiting the short-term financial concerns of people:** scammers may ask you to hand over an upfront fee when applying for a fictitious loan or credit. This is known as loan fee fraud or advance fee fraud.
- **Using the uncertainty around stock markets:** scammers may advise you to invest or transfer existing investments into highly risky investments.

- **Fake licences:** some scammers will claim to be or represent authorised firms or public institutions or will provide fake authorisation certificates.

The Commission urges members of the public to exercise care and take the following precautions in their financial dealings:

- Reject offers which you do not recognise or that cannot be verified;
- Beware of adverts on social media;
- Check if the persons or entities making the offers or issuing the promotions are regulated. The public register of the Commission can be accessed at the following link <https://www.fscmauritius.org/en/being-supervised/register-of-licensees> ;
- Do not click on links or open emails from senders that are unknown;
- Avoid being rushed or pressured into making decisions;
- Call back on a number already known for a provider if they have been contacted unexpectedly by someone saying they are from the product provider; and
- Be very cautious before giving your personal financial information (bank details, address, existing insurance/pensions/investment details) even if it is requested by someone purporting to be from your banking institution or the Commission.

Furthermore, you should consider the following:

- If you have provided personal details to a suspected scammer, consider changing any relevant passwords and access codes immediately; and
- Closely monitor your finances and report any suspicious activity expeditiously.

All persons undertaking any financial services or ought to conduct financial services have to be licensed and duly regulated by the Commission. In the event of any doubt you must consult the Commission or consult the register of licensees available on the website of

the Commission for persons/entities which are duly licensed/authorised/registered by the Commission under the relevant Acts.

The Commission urges investors and the public to exercise caution in relation to their dealing with any unregulated entities.

If you suspect that you have been the victim of a scam, contact the police immediately to report the matter. You may also contact the Commission at the following email address: fscmauritius@intnet.mu .

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About the FSC:

The FSC is the integrated regulator for the non-bank financial services sector and global business.

The vision of the Commission is to be an internationally recognised Financial Supervisor committed to the sustained development of Mauritius as a sound and competitive Financial Services Centre.

In carrying out its mission, the FSC aims to promote the development, fairness, efficiency and transparency of financial institutions and capital markets in Mauritius; suppress crime and malpractices so as to provide protection to members of the public investing in non-banking financial products; and ensure the soundness and stability of the financial system in Mauritius.

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