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## **ALERT!**

Valentine's Day is nearly here. People are looking for love and some in the wrong places. Romance Scams are back! In this day and age many people look to dating sites to find love. Unfortunately, Cupid's arrow can be a scammer in disguise.

Here is how it works. Scammers place profiles on dating sites and social networks. The scammer tells a story of a successful business person working overseas, and presents themselves as a thoughtful, caring and loving individual who is looking for their soul mate. They target unsuspecting singles and ask a lot of questions to build a relationship.

Once the person behind the fake profile has established a relationship, the scamming begins. The scammer starts to ask for financial assistance. This may be asking you to cash a check they are unable to cash themselves. For instance, they say they're in a hotel and cannot pay the bill or they claim they were mugged and are in the hospital and need you to pay their hospital bill. These are all lies used to steal your money!

Here are a few tips to protect you and your money against romance scams:

- Don't share personal info such as your address or date of birth online
- Be leery of users who ask you to leave the site and use a personal email address
- Never send money – especially overseas
- If you encounter a scammer-immediately report the user to both the dating service and the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center <https://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx>

For more information on scams, Like us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/SummitCountyProsecutorOffice/>

Stay Safe,

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