

August 2016

# Fraud Alert!

## HOW TO AVOID A TIMESHARE SCAM

According to a 2011 CBS News story, approximately 8 million Americans own timeshares, making the thriving industry ripe for con artists. Timeshare scams range from hidden booking or maintenance fees to more extreme cases, such as companies suddenly going out of business once they secure your hefty deposit, leaving you without a timeshare.

### Buying a Timeshare

#### STEP 1

Visit the Better Business Bureau website ([bbb.org](http://bbb.org)). Check for complaints registered against the timeshare company before attending its presentation. Cancel your meeting if the company has grievances filed against it.

#### STEP 2

Do not sign a contract or any documents at the presentation. Allow yourself the opportunity to consider the offer. Take the paperwork with you once the pitch is over. Review the contract and documents with a lawyer. Make certain the paperwork contains all the promises made during the presentation. If you decide to sign a contract at the time of the presentation, get a copy immediately upon signing it. Do not allow the company to mail or email you a copy at a later date.

#### STEP 3

Leave the room if the sales pitch becomes too aggressive. Do not feel obligated to stay for the entire presentation if the sales associate applies too much pressure or causes you to feel uncomfortable.

#### STEP 4

Talk with other owners, particularly if you are staying at the timeshare resort where you are considering purchasing property. Ask the other timeshare owners if they've experienced any problems with the timeshare's availability, maintenance and overall value, as well as any negative experiences with the company itself, such as unexpected charges or poor communication.

Reprinted from: <http://traveltips.usatoday.com/avoid-timeshare-scam-103279.html>

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## If You Are a Victim

If you think you are a victim of timeshare fraud, file a complaint with your district attorney's office and the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center at [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov).

## Monthly Fraud Alerts brought to you by:

### **Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force**

**Bucks County District Attorney's Office**

215-348-6344

**Bucks County Area Agency on Aging**

215-348-0510

**Bucks County Coroner's Office**

215-348-3852

**Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA)**

1-800-675-6900

**A Woman's Place (AWP)**

1-800-220-8116

**Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection**

215-348-6060

**Bucks County Register of Wills**

215-348-6265

**US Dept. of Health and Human Services/OIG**

1-800-447-8477

**[www.crimesagainstolderadultsbucks.org](http://www.crimesagainstolderadultsbucks.org)**

**24 - HOUR HOTLINE: 1-800-490-8505**