



PALM BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Dedicated to Excellence in Law Enforcement



Palm Beach Police
345 South County Road
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561-838-5454
www.palmbeachpolice.com

BE AWARE



1. DON'T SEND MONEY

Don't pay by money transfer systems like Western Union, or wire money to someone's bank account. Be sure to pay by credit card or PayPal, which enable you to dispute fraudulent charges.

2. MAKE SOME CALLS

Before you officially decide to book, give the owner or property manager a call and have a simple conversation with them. Be sure to ask them for references. Take notice of bad grammar in emails, foreign phone numbers, or if the owner/property manager is not responding to emails. These can all be warning signs

3. USE SEARCH ENGINES

If you're worried about a property, simply check it out yourself. With tools like Google Maps, it's easy to find photos of a property and check out the neighborhood. You can also try to locate the registry of deeds for the county where the property is located and look up the address to double check that the person does indeed own the home they are advertising.

VACATION RENTAL SCAM ALERT

BE AWARE AND PROTECT YOURSELF

The Town of Palm Beach has seen an increase in a common scam involving Vacation Rental Properties. Scammers know that finding the right apartment or vacation rental can be hard work, and a seemingly good deal is hard to pass up. It's now become commonplace to search for a deal on Craigslist or other online website, when looking to book a condo or a home, rather than through a traditional hotel. These listings may have tons of pictures and a lengthy description of a real house. But in many cases the poster of this ad doesn't even own the property!

HOW IT WORKS

Hijacked Ads

Some scammers hijack a real rental or real estate listing by changing the email address or other contact information, and placing the modified ad on another site. The altered ad may even use the name of the person who posted the original ad. In other cases, scammers have hijacked the email accounts of property owners on reputable vacation rental websites.

Phantom Rentals

Other rip-off artists make up listings for places that aren't for rent or don't exist, and try to lure you in with the promise of low rent, or great amenities. Their goal is to get your money before you find out.

To completely avoid scams, it's best to shy away from sites like Craigslist and book properties from legitimate vacation home rental sites. If you are a victim of this crime or find your property posted for rent on a website that you did not authorize, contact the Police Department immediately at 561-838-5454.