

CONSUMER ALERT

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

datecp.wi.gov



Consumer Alert: Scammers Are Using Mobile Payment Apps

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 6, 2021

Contact: Ti Gauger, Public Information Officer, (608) 224-5007, Ti.Gauger@Wisconsin.gov

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has seen increased consumer complaints reporting scammers using mobile payment apps like Venmo or Zelle.

Wisconsin consumers should be cautious using mobile payment apps when making purchases. As mobile payment apps gain popularity with consumers, reports indicate scammers are also increasing use of these platforms. Mobile payment apps can be a convenient way to send and receive money, but these apps are often linked directly to a consumers' credit or debit card and may provide scammers access to the funds in these accounts. Mobile payment apps may not offer the same purchase protection as credit or debit cards.

In one recent report to DATCP, a consumer attempted to purchase football tickets from a seller post on Craigslist. The seller seemed trustworthy, and the consumer sent \$400 through a mobile payment app to pay for the purchase. Unfortunately, the tickets never arrived, and the mobile payment app refused to refund the payment.

Scammers typically pressure people into making quick decisions. They may offer deals that are too good to be true, or they may list rare items like collectibles or hard-to-find event tickets. Scammers hope to entice people to make quick purchases without asking too many questions.

Some tips to consider when making purchases using mobile payment apps:

- When purchasing from an online marketplace, verify the owner's identity, read reviews from other purchasers, and research their profile if possible.
- Buy from trusted sources.
- Send and receive money only from trusted sources.
- When possible, choose payment methods that come with increased consumer protections, like a credit card.
- Be wary of suspicious advertisements. It is likely a scam if something seems too good to be true.

If you fall victim to this type of scam, file a complaint with the mobile app provider and ask them to reverse the transaction. If there is no resolution by the mobile app provider, report it to DATCP by filing a [complaint online](#), sending an email to DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov, or calling DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128.

###

Find more DATCP news in our [newsroom](#), on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).