Scammers target victims on online dating websites, but can also use social media or email to make contact.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?**

- Someone you have recently met online professes strong feelings for you, asking to chat privately.
- Their messages are often poorly written and vague.
- Their online profile is not consistent with what they tell you.
- They may ask you to send intimate pictures or videos of yourself.
- First they gain your trust. Then they ask you for money, gifts or your bank account/credit card details.
- If you don’t send the money, they may try to blackmail you. If you do send it, they will ask for more.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

- Be very careful about how much personal information you share on social network and dating sites.
- Always consider the risks. Scammers are present on the most reputable sites.
- Go slow and ask questions.
- Research the person’s photo and profile to see if the material has been used elsewhere.
- Be alert to spelling and grammar mistakes, inconsistencies in their stories and excuses such as their camera not working.
- Don’t share any compromising material that could be used to blackmail you.
- If you agree to meet in person, tell family and friends where you are going.
- Beware of money requests. Never send money or give credit card details, online account details, or copies of personal documents.
- Avoid sending them upfront payments.
- Don’t transfer money for someone else: money laundering is a criminal offence.

**ARE YOU A VICTIM?**

- Don’t feel embarrassed!
- Stop all contact immediately.
- If possible, keep all communication, such as the chat messages.
- File a complaint with the police.
- Report it to the site where the scammer first approached you.
- If you have provided your account details, contact your bank.