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## Five Signs It's a Scam! MoneyGram Spotlights Fraud Education

*Awareness Campaign Part of National Consumer Protection Week*

DALLAS--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- It's the phone call from a stranger who claims your relative is in trouble and needs cash or an email that says you've won a prize for a contest you never entered. These are tell-tale signs you're being scammed. As part of National Consumer Protection Week, MoneyGram (NASDAQ: MGI), a leading global money transfer and payment services company, is educating consumers on how to spot fraud.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, Americans lost an estimated \$1.6 billion dollars in fraud related crimes in 2013. To help consumers keep their hard earned money out of the hands of fraudsters, MoneyGram is warning them to watch out for these five signs they are being targeted by scam artists.

### **You Hit the Jackpot!**

You receive an email or phone call stating you won a prize but you must pay fees before receiving it. This is the Sweepstakes Scam. No legitimate sweepstakes will ask for money up front. You should never send money to receive money!

### **The IRS is Looking for You**

You get a phone call claiming you owe "back taxes" and will be arrested if you don't transfer money fast. This is a scam. Remember, the IRS typically contacts people by mail, not by phone. The agency will never ask for payments via a wire transfer or ask for a credit card number over the phone.

### **Your Relative is in Trouble**

You get a phone call from a person claiming to be a friend or family member in trouble who needs cash quickly. This is the "person in need scam" also referred to as the "grandparent scam." Don't send the money unless you can verify with your friend or family member that the story is true.

### **Get Paid to Shop**

You're offered a job to be a mystery shopper. Your "boss" sends you a check to cover the cost of the items you'll buy at the store you are evaluating. When you get the check the money is for more than it should be. The fraudster will ask you to wire the extra back to him. The check turns out to be a fake and once you've sent the money, there's no way to recover the funds.

### **Act Now! You Won't Find a Better Deal Than This!**

You're shopping and find an ad for something you want at an incredible price. The culprits pulling this scam will usually ask you to pay quickly with a money transfer. You may even get a confirmation letter or receipt. But, the reality is this is an Internet purchase scam and the item you bought probably doesn't exist.

"These are all tactics used in common scams that bilk millions of Americans out of money each year," says Kim Garner, SVP global security at MoneyGram. "Wiring money is like sending cash, once you send it you cannot get it back, that's why we tell consumers to never send money to someone they don't know."

Consumers should also follow the three Rs - recognize, react, and report.

- **Recognize:** Savvy consumers should look for red flags when someone asks them to send money through a wire service or money order, because scammers often request these methods knowing that once the money is sent, it cannot be retrieved.
- **React:** When a consumer identifies a scam, they should immediately put an end to any transaction or conversation - hang up the phone, delete the email, or end the back-and-forth messaging.

- **Report:** Report the suspected scam to the local police, and file reports with the [Federal Trade Commission](#), [National Consumers League](#), and [Internet Crime Complaint Center](#) (if the suspected fraud was online).

Consumers should call 1-800-MONEYGRAM (800-666-3947) if they believe MoneyGram was used to wire money as a result of a scam. Since mid-2010, MoneyGram has helped prevent hundreds of millions of dollars in suspected fraud activity globally, put those dollars back in the pockets of consumers, and kept the funds out of the hands of scammers. Consumers can learn more about protecting themselves against fraud at [www.moneygram-preventfraud.com](http://www.moneygram-preventfraud.com).

#### About MoneyGram International

MoneyGram International, a leading money transfer company, enables consumers who are not fully served by traditional financial institutions to meet their financial needs. MoneyGram offers money transfer services worldwide through a global network of 336,000 agent locations - including retailers, international post offices and financial institutions - in more than 200 countries and territories. MoneyGram also offers bill payment services in the U.S. and Canada. To learn more about money transfer or bill payment at an agent location or online, please visit [moneygram.com](http://moneygram.com) or connect with us on Facebook.

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