



# CONSUMER ALERT

810 FIRST STREET, NE, SUITE 701 | WASHINGTON, DC 20002 | DISB.DC.GOV

## Know Who You Are Doing Business With

*Scammers are using false D.C. addresses, phone numbers and government agency names*

People have contacted the D.C. Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking, known as DISB, with questions about the validity of certain loan offers, investments and entrepreneurial enterprises from purported official D.C. or federal agencies. DISB warns you to watch out for scammers trying to appear credible by faking a physical presence in the District of Columbia. Some use a name that implies a governmental affiliation such as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, commonly referred to as the FDIC, when they have no relationship to the governmental institution.

False District of Columbia addresses, area code “202” roll over phone systems and “virtual offices” are used to create a false front for the scam. Some use addresses of U.S. federal agencies to create the illusion that the entity operates in a federal facility. Scammers also use fake websites with D.C. addresses and information to give credibility to their scheme.

If you are questioning the validity of an investment offering or financial service, call DISB to ask if the entity is legitimate and licensed or if we have an investigation pending. You can reach us at (202) 727-8000.

### Things to Remember

- The federal government is separate from the District of Columbia Government. One of the many agencies that fall under D.C. government is DISB, the D.C. Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking.
- DISB regulates financial services business operating in the District of Columbia such as insurance companies, investment advisers, broker-dealers, District-chartered banks, mortgage lenders and brokers, check cashers, money transmitters, money lenders and consumer-credit-service organizations. We encourage you to contact us to verify that an entity you are going to conduct business with is licensed by our agency. We can also direct you to the appropriate agency if the company is not within our jurisdiction.

### Bottom line

If you don't know who you are handing your money to, you risk losing that money. Be informed, do your research and use DISB as a resource.

*The D.C. Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking has two missions: to fairly and efficiently regulate financial services in order to protect the people of the District of Columbia and to attract and retain financial-services businesses to the District. For more information, visit DISB at [disb.dc.gov](http://disb.dc.gov).*

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