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**Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White Announces Current Investor Threats**

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White is urging investors to be wary of internet and social media schemes promoting precious metals, cryptocurrencies, promissory notes and foreign exchange markets. This week marks Consumer Protection Week and White reminds investors to contact the Securities Department to report investment fraud.

“We expect to see more complaints from investors who have been lured into schemes offering the promise of high returns in order to supplement lost income due to the pandemic,” said Secretary White.

The North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA), which includes the Illinois Securities Department, conducted a nationwide survey, which found fraudulent internet, or social media schemes as the top investor threat. Other top schemes included cryptocurrency-related and precious metals-based investments, foreign exchange-related schemes and investments involving foreign exchange and cryptocurrency-related schemes disguised as membership or investment programs.

White said investment offers that sound “too good to be true” often share similar characteristics. The most common telltale sign of an investment scam is an offer of guaranteed high returns with no risk.

The NASAA survey, which included responses of enforcement officials throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico, also indicated that 82% of state and provincial securities regulators anticipate that fraudsters will continue to attempt to prey on investor fear and anxiety related to changes in financial markets and the economy due to COVID-19.

White reminds Illinois investors to verify that the salesperson and the investment itself are properly licensed or registered. To check if a salesperson or investment advisor is registered, contact the Secretary of State’s Securities Department at 800-628-7937 or visit [www.AvoidTheScam.net](http://www.AvoidTheScam.net) for more information.

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