



# Housing and Hotel Impersonation Fraud Alert

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has taken action to stem the surging complaints around impersonation fraud as well as public outcry about the harms caused to consumers and to impersonated individuals.

## FTC anti-fraud rule

The FTC's [Government and Business Impersonation Rule](#) took effect on April 1, targeting scammers who impersonate businesses and government entities. The rule gives the FTC stronger tools to go after those who target the business events industry with impersonation scams including:

- Hotel reservation scams
- Attendee list sale scams

## What's new?

The FTC is enabled to file court cases aimed at forcing scammers to return the money they made from impersonation scams that:

- Use business logos when communicating with consumers by mail or online.
- Spoof business emails and web addresses, including using lookalike email addresses or websites that rely on misspellings of a company's name.
- Falsely imply business affiliation by using terms that are known to be affiliated with a business.

## What's next?

With the [final Government and Business Impersonation Rule](#) effective April 1, mechanisms are in place so show organizers, exhibitors and others can report these scams directly to the FTC. Follow these steps to properly report impersonation fraud cases:

1. Visit [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://ReportFraud.ftc.gov).
2. Click the "Report Now" button.
3. Select the "An impersonator" box on the top left in the set of 10 boxes (see example).
4. Select "Well-known or trusted business" box on the top right in the set of six boxes (see example).
5. Click continue and follow the process from there, which should only take 1-2 minutes.

Is your report about any of these common problems?  
Choose the best fit. If you don't see your problem, choose "Something else."

<input checked="" type="radio"/> An impersonator <small>(ex. fake government, business, low interest, grandchild)</small>	<input type="radio"/> Online shopping
<input type="radio"/> Job, investment, money-making opportunity, franchise	<input type="radio"/> Sweepstakes, prize, lottery
<input type="radio"/> Phone, internet, TV service	<input type="radio"/> Auto sale, repair
<input type="radio"/> Health <small>(ex. weight loss, eye care, treatment)</small>	<input type="radio"/> Credit, debt, loan <small>(ex. debt collection, credit report, student loan debt relief)</small>
<input type="radio"/> Just an annoying call	<input type="radio"/> Something else <small>(we'll get it to the right place)</small>

Who were they pretending to be?

<input type="radio"/> Government authority or agency <small>(ex. Social Security, IRS, Medicare, Medicaid, police)</small>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Well-known or trusted business <small>(ex. tech support, dating company, bank)</small>
<input type="radio"/> Grandchild, family member, or friend	<input type="radio"/> Love interest <small>(ex. someone on a dating site)</small>
<input type="radio"/> Your boss or co-worker	<input type="radio"/> Charity or charitable cause

## Advocacy works

AAOMS works with professional organizations such as the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE) and the Exhibitions and Conferences Alliance (ECA). ECA, its alliance partners and industry leaders – including the Consumer Technology Association, the American Society of Association Executives and IAEE's Major American Trade Show Organizers group – have been advocating in support of this new rule for more than two years including:

- Submitting multiple [comment letters](#).
- [Testifying](#) at an informal FTC hearing last May.
- Supporting a coalition effort that resulted in [a letter](#) signed by 235 groups.
- Highlighting the issue for members of Congress during ECA's 2023 Legislative Action Day, which generated additional [Congressional support](#).