



State of Nevada Department of Business & Industry

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Fight Fraud Taskforce warns Latinos: **Don't be scammed by "notarios"!**

Las Vegas – The Nevada Fight Fraud Taskforce warns that the Hispanic community is at risk for being scammed by “notarios”.

In Latin America, a “notario” is typically a licensed attorney. However, in the United States, the term is often confused with “notario publico” or “notary public”, which is a person who can witness signatures and administer oaths but is not a lawyer.

The translation confusion can lead many Latinos to be fooled into paying for services from Spanish-speaking “notarios” that those individuals are not authorized to provide.

“I get several complaints every day about these ‘notarios,’” says Leticia Bravo, Ombudsman for Minority Affairs for the Department of Business & Industry and member of the Fight Fraud Taskforce. *“People are losing hundreds or thousands of dollars to these con artists who promise to save their homes or take care of their immigration status or more.”*

Undocumented immigrants are often hesitant to report that they’ve been scammed or deceived, especially by members of their own communities, says Ms. Bravo, who is fluent in Spanish. She stresses that it’s critical for victims to come forward and file a complaint so that action can be taken to shut the fraudulent operations down.

Latino consumers are advised to be cautious if their “notario”:

- Makes outrageous promises and requires a large up-front fee.
 - Does not provide a written contract.
 - Offers a broad range of multi-services – or “multi-servicios” – such as DMV assistance, tax preparation, and loan modification – in the same office.
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For more information about fraud in Spanish, visit <http://fightfraud.nv.gov/EnEspanol.htm> or contact Leticia Bravo at (702) 486-9752.

About the Fight Fraud Taskforce and Website

The statewide Fight Fraud Taskforce includes members from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and other local law enforcement agencies, the I.R.S., the Department of Justice, the Nevada Attorney General and its Bureau of Consumer Protection, the Secretary of State, the Better Business Bureau in Las Vegas and Reno, the Department of Business & Industry, the Division of Mortgage Lending, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Federal Trade Commission, U.S.P.S., and experts from the private sector among others. The group acts as a clearinghouse for fraud information and strives to educate the public on how to avoid the latest scams.

The Fight Fraud Taskforce also ensures that the latest fraud information is available on the Fight Fraud website: <http://fightfraud.nv.gov>. Consumers are encouraged to visit the site, which includes extensive tips on how to prevent fraud and provides downloadable complaint forms to help you respond effectively if you become a victim. Visit it regularly for the latest fraud alerts.

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