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Romance scams blossom in these 10 states

By [Jem Shin](#) July 15, 2022 11:45 AM



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When the pandemic limited the chance to find love in person, online dating became an even more attractive option. But as the popularity of connecting through apps and websites blossomed, so did the chance for people to fall victim to romance scams.

Over the past five years, romance frauds have grown more common — and more costly. The [Federal Trade Commission](#) found that Americans lost a record \$547 million to tricksters posing as lovers in 2021, an increase of almost 80% from 2020. Victims lost on average tens of thousands of dollars.

Using data from the FBI's [Internet Crime Complaint Center](#), [Forbes Advisor](#) determined which American states had the most romance scam victims from 2017 to 2021. Overall, 86,422 Americans fell victim to fake love schemes over the last five years, with a total financial loss of more than \$2.3 billion. And that's just the cases that were reported.

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fraudsters and their victims are “almost always about money,” he said.

What advisors can do

Ahmed believes that financial advisors should get involved if it appears that their clients’ romantic interests are being taken advantage of.

“There’s advisors, and then there’s an advisor who’s totally on your side,” Ahmed said. “I think your job as their advisor is to be intimately involved, and they should come to you, especially [since] it concerns finances if it’s a romance scam.”

For people getting involved in an online romance who are wary of romance scammers, Ahmed suggests talking over the situation with a “disinterested third party” like a friend to get an outside opinion from. And while the pandemic led to [a surge in online dating](#), Ahmed says that romance scams will remain even after a return to normal.

“Don’t think that this is just gonna stop because the pandemic is over,” Ahmed said. “This is gonna be forever. People will continue to be made suckers because we are prone to that.”

Scroll down to see the 10 states that dealt with the most overall romance scams from 2017 to 2021, and the 10 with the most victims per capita.

1. California - 12,205 victims



Chip Chipman/Bloomberg

Collective financial loss: \$516.2 million
Average financial loss per victim: \$42,298.44

2. Florida - 6,980 victims