

FORECLOSURE SCAMS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

A foreclosure lawsuit is a publicly accessible document that anyone can see. Scammers use this information to deceive homeowners into paying for illegal services to "retain" their homes or even signing it away.

BEWARE OF:

- Phone calls, visitors, and mailings from people and companies that you don't know or that you have never reached out to;
- "Mortgage rescue" websites or companies, especially ones located out of state;
- Notices that look like official court documents, but are still trying to sell you a service;
- "Forensic audits" requiring an upfront fee to review your loan history and documents to obtain a mortgage discharge;
- Overly friendly or aggressive investors, consultants, and attorneys you don't know; and
- Advertisements offering to "negotiate" with the bank.

DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING without consulting your attorney, especially if it:

- Requires you to sign over your home, even if promised you may rent to buy it back later;
- Offers to "fix" your mortgage for a fee;
- Offers to pay your mortgage;
- Offers to pay you a lump sum of money;
- Offers to hire an attorney for you;
- Offers a "one-stop shop" arrangement for financing, legal service, or home inspection;
- Says they can have your mortgage discharged;
- Tells you not to go to court;
- Tells you not to contact your lender; and
- You were threatened or feel threatened into signing the document.

It is a violation of New York law to charge upfront fees for mortgage-related services, and violations should be reported to the Attorney General's office at 1-800-771-7755.



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