

Resource List

Wisconsin Resources

Department of Financial Institutions (DFI)

DFI oversees the licensing and regulation of financial institutions in Wisconsin through several different organizations within the Department. These currently include the divisions of Securities, Banking, Corporate and Consumer Services, and the Office of Credit Unions.

Website: www.wdfi.org

Phone: (608) 261-9555 (Hearing impaired callers - **TTY:** 7-1-1)

Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WIDFI> for updates on red flags or emerging scams.

Division of Securities and the Examiner of the Day Hotline

The Division oversees registration of securities offerings, broker-dealer and investment adviser firms, as well as the firms' agents or representatives. The Division also investigates complaints and provides investor education.

A securities examiner is available Monday - Friday from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm to answer questions about broker-dealer and investment adviser firms, financial professionals, and securities product offerings. Before investing or hiring a financial professional, call the Division to make sure that both are properly registered in Wisconsin.

Phone: 608-266-2139 (Examiner of the Day)

You can also visit www.wdfi.org and scroll down to click on **Securities Broker Check** or **Investment Adviser Check** to check broker-dealers' and investment advisers' representatives securities backgrounds online.

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI)

OCI ensures the insurance industry responsibly meets Wisconsin's insurance needs. OCI regulates annuity products – direct concerns about variable or fixed annuities to OCI.

Website: <http://oci.wi.gov/>

Phone: 608-266-3585

Electronic complaint submission: OCIComplaints@wisconsin.gov

Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP)

DATCP provides invaluable protective services to the public, especially concerning financial scams directed at seniors, including but not limited to identity theft, credit cards, grandparent scams, phishing, spoofing, contests, lotteries, sweepstake or prize promotions, charitable solicitations, and inheritance scams.

Website: <http://datcp.wi.gov/>

Phone: 608-224-4876

Email: DATCPHotline@wi.gov

Office of Privacy Protection (OPP)

As part of DATCP's Bureau of Consumer Protection, the OPP educates Wisconsin citizens on how to protect their identities and helps victims of identity theft reclaim their identity and restore their credit standing.

Website: <http://www.privacy.wi.gov/>

Phone: 608-224-5163

Email: DATCPWisconsinPrivacy@wisconsin.gov

Adult Protective Services (APS)

APS is a division within the Department of Health Services in Wisconsin, and provides services to aid elder adults who have been abused, neglected, or exploited – including financial abuse or exploitation. There are APS agencies in each county in Wisconsin, with hotlines for reporting suspected abuse.

Website: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aps/ear-agencies.htm>

Dane County Department of Human Services – Area Agency on Aging

Website: <https://aaa.dcdhs.com/>

Phone: 608-261-9933

Additional Regulatory, Nonprofit, and Other Resources

Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

The SEC is a federal agency which oversees key securities world participants, including exchanges, broker-dealers, investment advisers, and securities products. They promote investor education and provide information and assistance for securities-related questions or concerns through the Office of Investor Education and Advocacy.

Website: www.investor.gov

Phone: 800-732-0330 (Toll Free)

A list of important questions to ask an investment professional before letting them handle your money can be found at:

www.investor.gov/sites/default/files/sec-questions-investors-should-ask.pdf

Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA)

FINRA is a self-regulating organization of the securities industry. It oversees broker-dealers and other firms to ensure compliance with securities regulations, and provides investor education through their non-profit arm, the Save and Invest Organization. They also maintain a toll free Securities Helpline for Seniors to provide assistance regarding brokerage accounts and investments.

FINRA Website: www.finra.org

Save and Invest Website: www.saveandinvest.org

FINRA Securities Helpline for Seniors: 844-574-3577 (Toll Free)

If a professional has letters behind their name, check FINRA's helpful catalog of the different requirements for financial certifications to see what they mean:

<http://www.finra.org/Investors/ToolsCalculators/ProfessionalDesignations/DesignationsLookup>

Gauge how risky a potential investment may be with the **Scam-O-Meter** at:

<http://apps.finra.org/meters/2/ScamMeter.aspx>

North American Securities Administrators' Association (NASAA)

NASAA is comprised of state securities administrators who focus on how to effectively protect and serve investors. In addition to providing tools to help regulators, NASAA has investor education materials available to the public on its website, like the example below. The Wisconsin Division of Securities is active with NASAA.

Website: www.nasaa.org

A helpful brochure, “Cutting through the Confusion,” covers the meanings and duties behind different designations and roles for financial professionals such as investment adviser representatives and securities agents can be found at:

www.nasaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Cutting-through-the-Confusion_2013.pdf

NASAA recently developed the Serve Our Seniors website, which provides resources for senior investors, family caregivers, the securities industry, and policymakers.

Website: www.serveourseniors.org

Better Business Bureau (BBB)

The BBB is an organization which researches and fields complaints or inquiries concerning businesses. It also provides information on new scams or fraudulent schemes. If you have a complaint or want more information about a business, call the BBB.

Website: <http://www.bbb.org/wisconsin/>

Phone: 414-847-6000

AARP, Inc., AARP Foundation, and AARP Wisconsin

AARP, Inc. is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, which advocates on many issues for older Americans. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection and empowerment to older persons in need with support. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

AARP Main Website: www.aarp.org

AARP Wisconsin Phone: 866-448-3611

AARP Wisconsin Email: wistate@aarp.org

You can sign up for the AARP's Fraud Watch Network and receive email alerts about current and emerging financial scams targeting seniors by going to <http://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/fraud-watch-network/> and clicking on "Get Watchdog Alerts."

Investor Protection Trust (IPT)

The IPT is a nonprofit organization devoted to investor education. They sponsor the Elder Investment Fraud and Financial Exploitation Prevention Program (EIFFE), which educates professionals working with the elderly to recognize signs of financial abuse.

Website: <http://www.investorprotection.org>

EIFFE offers an informational brochure for patients which you can review and discuss with your doctor during your next check-up available at:

www.investorprotection.org/downloads/EIFFE_Patient_Brochure_National.pdf