



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**May 16, 2018**

### **AG Coffman Alerts Consumers that if they were Scammed by People Using Western Union, they can now File a Claim to Get Money Back**

*Company Paid \$586 Million to Settle Charges*

**DENVER-** The Federal Trade Commission is alerting consumers who lost money to scammers who told them to pay via Western Union’s money transfer system between January 1, 2004 and January 19, 2017, that they can now file a claim to get their money back by going to [FTC.gov/WU](http://FTC.gov/WU) before May 31, 2018. From January 1, 2004 to August 30, 2015, Western Union received 9,043 fraud complaints from Colorado consumers for losses totaling \$10,868,502.35.

“Western Union owes a responsibility to American consumers to actively guard against fraud,” said Attorney General Cynthia Coffman. “For years, Western Union allowed scam artists to use its money transfer system to get payments from victims. I am glad this settlement will provide much needed relief to the many Coloradan’s affected by these scams.”

The refund program follows a settlement with the [Western Union Company](#), which in January 2017 agreed to pay \$586 million to resolve charges brought by the FTC and the U.S. Department of Justice. The FTC alleged that fraudsters were able to use Western Union’s money transfer system to get payments from their victims, even though the company was aware of the problem and received hundreds of thousands of complaints about money transfers made for fraudulent [lottery and prizes](#), [family emergencies](#), [advance-fee loans](#), [online dating](#) and other scams. The company also allegedly failed to promptly discipline problem Western Union agents, and failed to have effective anti-fraud policies and procedures.

“American consumers lost money while Western Union looked the other way,” said FTC Acting Chairman Maureen K. Ohlhausen. “We’re pleased to start the process that will get that money back into consumers’ rightful hands.”

Affected consumers should go to [FTC.gov/WU](https://www.ftc.gov/WU) to file claims, learn more, or get updates on the claims process.

Some people who have already reported their losses to Western Union, the FTC, or another government agency will receive a form in the mail from the claims administrator, Gilardi & Co. The form will have a Claim ID and a PIN number to use when filing a claim online via [FTC.gov/WU](https://www.ftc.gov/WU). Gilardi was hired by Justice Department, which is responsible for returning victims' money as part of its settlement with Western Union.

**Filing a claim is free, so consumers should not pay anyone to file a claim on their behalf. No one associated with the claims process will ever call to ask for consumers' bank account or credit card number.**

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