LOCK OUT FRAUD

DEALER CLONE SCAMS: DON'T GET TAKEN FOR A RIDE

BEWARE OF DEALER CLONES



A dealer clone is a fake website or online presence that impersonates a legitimate motor vehicle dealership. Scammers copy dealer information, advertise vehicles they do not own, and convince buyers to wire money for vehicles that do not exist.

WHY DEALER CLONES ARE DANGEROUS

These scams often target buyers of classic cars, luxury vehicles, motorcycles, and RVs. The websites can appear legitimate, using fake reviews, falsified dealer credentials, fabricated vehicle documents, and convincing photos. Victims can lose tens of thousands of dollars through wire transfers, and recovering the funds can be difficult.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- **Be skeptical** of prices that seem too good to be true.
- **Verify** the dealership independently through official state licensing records and trusted sources.
- **Research** the website domain. Newly created websites claiming years of experience are a red flag.
- **Watch** for geographic inconsistencies, strange photos, AI-generated images, or references that do not match Wisconsin locations.
- **Be cautious** when a seller strongly pushes shipping and discourages in-person inspections.
- **Never rely solely** on documents, reviews, or certificates supplied by the seller.
- **Contact the dealership** directly using a verified phone number before wiring funds.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER

Verify before you wire. If a vehicle seller pressures you to send money quickly or something feels suspicious, stop and independently confirm the dealership is legitimate.



IF YOU SUSPECT A DEALER CLONE

Contact the dealership and **The Wisconsin Department of Transportation** immediately using independently verified contact information. If funds have been sent already, notify your financial institution immediately, report the incident to local law enforcement, and submit a complaint to the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center at **ic3.gov**. Prompt reporting may help prevent additional losses and protect other consumers.

Wisconsin Bankers ASSOCIATION