

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES  
DIVISION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION  
OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

**FAST FACTS - FORECLOSURE RESCUE SCAMS**

Home foreclosures are increasing dramatically across the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, so-called foreclosure rescue scams are increasing as well. Scammers typically try to trick homeowners into signing over the deed to their home by promising that they will sell the home back to the homeowner at a later date. Sadly, homeowners who fall for the scam are usually evicted while the scammer makes off with any equity there may be in the home. Here are some fast facts to help you avoid becoming the victim of a foreclosure rescue scam.

- **TALK WITH YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

Foreclosures adversely affect financial institutions as well as homeowners. Lenders are typically in the best position to assist when you fall behind on your mortgage. Do not hide from them; they may be willing to adjust the terms of your mortgage to help keep you in your home. The sooner you contact them, the more assistance they may be able to provide you.

- **SEEK COUNSELING FROM AN APPROVED INSTITUTION**

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development maintains a list of HUD-approved housing counseling agencies. Call 1-800-569-4287 or visit <http://www.hud.gov/foreclosure>. You can also contact the Homeownership Preservation Foundation at 1-888-995-HOPE (4673) or visit <http://www.995hope.org>

- **TALK WITH AN ATTORNEY BEFORE YOU SIGN ANY DOCUMENT**

The Virginia Lawyer Referral Service can assist you in scheduling an initial consultation with an attorney. Call 1-800-552-7977 or visit <http://www.vsb.org/site/public/lawyer-referral-service>. You can also contact your local legal aid office. Call 1-866-534-5243 to find the office nearest you or visit <http://www.valegalaid.org/VA/index.cfm>

- **KNOW THE LAW, KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

On July 1, 2008, the Virginia Consumer Protection Act was amended to address foreclosure rescue scams. Under the Act, it is illegal to collect fees up front for foreclosure rescue services. To learn more about the new law, visit [§59.1-200.1. Prohibited practices; foreclosure rescue.](#)

- **IF YOU HAVE BEEN A VICTIM OF A FORECLOSURE RESCUE SCAM**

Contact the Office of Consumer Affairs at (800) 552-9963 throughout Virginia or (804) 786-2042 from the Richmond area. Visit <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/consumers/index.shtml>