



Scam Newsletter 2020.12

CAR WRAP SCAMS

Ari Lazarus - Consumer Education Specialist, FTC

We just heard from more companies that scammers are using their names to trick people into a car wrap scam. This time, scammers are saying they're Marlboro or Purell (but they're not really).

The gist of the scam is this: scammers send emails and post to social media and job boards with messages like "GET PAID TO DRIVE." They offer to pay you up to \$700 a week if you'll drive around with your car (or truck or bike) wrapped to advertise a well-known product. But they're not really affiliated with the brand. They just want your money.

If you message them back, they'll send you a check to deposit into your bank account. **Then** they'll say to use some of that money to pay their "decal agent" to put the ads on your car. They'll tell you to pay by money order, Walmart money services, or by making a cash deposit directly into the decal agent's bank account — all ways that are hard to cancel or get your money back.

So what's really going on? Well, the "decal agent" is really the scammer. And that check you just deposited? That was fake — which means the money you sent is coming out of your own pocket. So, if you deposited a \$1,500 check and sent \$500 to the "decal agent," you're out \$500 of your own money. (And you don't get to keep that \$1,000, either.)

Another thing: an FTC analysis published earlier this year showed that fake check scams hit 20- and 30-year-olds hard in the wallet. People reported a median loss in 2019 of \$1,988.

Spotted a scam like this? We want to hear about it. Let us know at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/ReportFraud).

*It's **YOUR** money – let's protect it together!*
