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## **AARP Pennsylvania Warns of Vacation Scams as Summer Travel Season Begins**

**Harrisburg, PA** – With the arrival of travel season, AARP Pennsylvania reminds travelers to remain vigilant against scams that could turn dream vacations into disappointing ordeals. Travelers looking forward to relaxing and exploring new destinations should be cautious of too-good-to-be-true deals on vacation rentals and car hires.

"Nothing ruins a vacation faster than realizing your booking was a sham," stated Mary Bach, Volunteer and Chair of the Consumer Issues Task Force at AARP Pennsylvania. "We see a lot of advertisements for luxurious properties and premium car rentals at unrealistically low rates. It's crucial to do your due diligence before making any payments."

Vacation rental scams often involve properties listed with enticingly low rates and exceptional amenities. Scammers may hijack legitimate listings or create entirely fictitious ones using stolen images. They typically push for quick deals and upfront payments, only for travelers to discover the truth upon arrival.

Car rental scams also surge during high travel seasons, with fraudsters enticing travelers with exceptionally low rates and insisting on advance payments, often through untraceable methods like gift cards or prepaid debit cards, leaving travelers stranded.

David Kalinoski, Associate State Director of Outreach for AARP Pennsylvania, emphasized the importance of verification: "Before booking, confirm the property exists through tools like Google Street View and insist on a detailed rental agreement. For car rentals, ensure you are using the company's genuine website or real customer service number."

AARP Pennsylvania offers these additional tips to protect yourself:

- Research the property, owner, and travel deals thoroughly.
- Never pay by wire transfer, prepaid debit card, or gift card.
- Pay by credit card for added security and potential recourse.
- Verify all terms in writing, including cancellation and refund policies.

"We urge all travelers to be cautious and report any suspicious offers," added Kalinoski. "By staying informed and cautious, you can ensure that your vacation is memorable for all the right reasons."

You can sign up for free, biweekly Watchdog Alerts to have information on the latest scams delivered right to your phone. Text FWN to 50757.

Report scams to local law enforcement. For help from AARP, call 1-877-908-3360 or visit the AARP Pennsylvania Fraud Resource Page at [aarp.org/pafraud](http://aarp.org/pafraud).

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### **About AARP**

*AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org), [www.aarp.org/espanol](http://www.aarp.org/espanol) or follow @AARP, @AARPenEspanol and @AARPadvocates, @AliadosAdelante on social media.*