

## Acronym: NC SOS

Government Entity: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State

**Main Department Contact Number/Website:** (919) 814-5400 <https://www.sosnc.gov>

- Securities Division (Investment Fraud)
  - Check registration of securities professional or product:
    - Commercial Direct: (919) 814-5400, Option 7, then Option 1
    - Toll-free Direct: (800) 688-4507
  - Complaints may be filed at [https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/securities/file\\_a\\_complaint](https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/securities/file_a_complaint)
    - Contact: Ms. Sunny Mansour (919-814-5505 or [nmansour@sosnc.gov](mailto:nmansour@sosnc.gov) )
  - website: <https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/securities>
  - Securities Division point of contact for referrals through HelpVul platform:
    - William “Bill” Baker: [wbaker@sosnc.gov](mailto:wbaker@sosnc.gov)
- Trademark Enforcement/Counterfeit products (including fake prescription medications)
  - David Register, Supervisory Special Agent for Special Investigations/Trademark Enforcement
    - [dregister@sosnc.gov](mailto:dregister@sosnc.gov)
  - Report suspected fakes or counterfeits using form at <https://form.jotform.com/200765477257059>
- Notary Enforcement
  - (919) 814-5400, Option 5 or [notary@sosnc.gov](mailto:notary@sosnc.gov)
  - Report suspected notary fraud using the most appropriate form at [https://www.sosnc.gov/forms/by\\_title/Tip\\_And\\_Complaint\\_Notary](https://www.sosnc.gov/forms/by_title/Tip_And_Complaint_Notary)
- Charitable Solicitation Licensing Division
  - Check registration of charities or charitable solicitors:
    - Online registry: [https://www.sosnc.gov/online\\_services/search/by\\_title/charities](https://www.sosnc.gov/online_services/search/by_title/charities)
    - Commercial Direct: (919) 814-5400, Option 6
    - Toll-free Direct: (888) 830-4989 or [csl@sosnc.gov](mailto:csl@sosnc.gov)
  - File suspected charity fraud complaints using form at <https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/charities/enforcement>
- Business Registration Division
  - Check the registration status and view all filings of North Carolina businesses at [https://www.sosnc.gov/online\\_services/search/by\\_title/Business\\_Registration](https://www.sosnc.gov/online_services/search/by_title/Business_Registration).
  - For sole proprietorships registered with county Registers of Deeds offices since December 1, 2017, check the online Assumed Business Name registry at [https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/business\\_registration/assumed\\_business\\_names](https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/business_registration/assumed_business_names).
  - While most businesses in North Carolina are required to register with the Secretary of State Business Registration Division to lawfully operate, the Department lacks criminal enforcement authority against any business which fails to do so. When necessary, the Department can dissolve a company

administratively if it fails to maintain its registration requirements. There are many different kinds of business crimes and violations of rules and law. Besides consulting an attorney for advice, consider contacting local law enforcement and the Attorney General's office at (877) 566-7226 or (919) 716-6400.

**Position of Contact Number Person:** See above.

**Main Departmental website address:** <https://www.sosnc.gov/>

**Social media:** Twitter (@NCSecState); Facebook (@NCSecState); LinkedIn (@North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State); YouTube (@North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State)

**Does the entity respond to inquiries via social media?** General questions may be submitted and answered through our social media platforms, but this is not the preferred means of submitting complaints. Refer to the information above.

**Which citizen problems the agency addresses (please describe the jurisdictional areas of responsibility):** Among other things, the NC Department of the Secretary of State administers and enforces the state's laws regarding securities (investments and the people who sell, promote or advise about investing); trademarks and counterfeits; notaries; and charities and charitable solicitors.

**What types of enforcement action are authorized? (Please check all that apply):**

- Civil
- Criminal
- Administrative
- Refer to other  federal /  state agency.

**Please list the other agency(cies) to whom the Secretary of State's Office might typically make subsequent referrals:**

We work closely with all other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, including state and federal district attorneys.

**How do reporters/victims double check to ensure 6, 12, 18 months from now that this STILL is where they need to report?** Check our website or use the contact information provided above.

**What the agency won't do:** We cannot offer or provide legal advice. We will not confirm or deny that a person or entity is the subject of a complaint until a public filing is made.

**What information/data points are needed to report effectively? Describe the process.** When reporting a suspected violation or crime, please gather who, what, when, where. Times and exact locations are vital. Identification / description of suspect, vehicle descriptions and witness identification are helpful. Completing the appropriate complaint form cited above with as much of the requested information you can provide is extremely helpful. Complaints may be filed anonymously, but doing so means that a representative will be unable to ask additional questions. Once a complaint is submitted, it will be reviewed to determine whether our agency has jurisdiction, whether additional information is required, and/or whether a subsequent referral is necessary or more appropriate.

**Who can make reports?** Anyone.

**How can incidents be reported? Is there a telephonic option for those who are not digitally savvy or comfortable with online reporting?** Please refer to the information provided above.

To the victim (and/or reporting individual), the agency will:

- **Provide complaint number?** Generally, complaints are acknowledged upon receipt. In cases involving notaries and charities/charitable solicitors, the complainant receives a letter with a complaint file number on it. In cases involving suspected securities (investment) fraud, complainants also have the right to seek private counsel and pursue a civil course of action through the court system.
- **Provide copy of complaint?** The Department urges those who file complaints to save copies before submitting them; the Department does not provide copies of complaints submitted to this agency.
- **Acknowledge receipt of complaints?** Yes / No
- **Provide status updates?** The Department's general policy is not to provide updates, although updates may be provided upon request of the complainant in some types of administrative cases. Administrative complaints are subject to the NC Public Records Act. However, whether the complaint is being examined for criminal or administrative action, complainants may be contacted for further details. Complainants are entitled to additional information including updates whenever criminal court proceedings are initiated.
- **Seek restitution?** Yes, restitution can be a part of the case and this is why good record keeping is vital. The Department lacks the authority to order restitution. Only a court can do that.

If the agency does not interact with victims, then explain

- **Where reports should be filed regarding this issue to achieve a response:** Please follow the instructions for each type of complaint filed at the sites referenced above.
- **Why is taking the time to report so important? How is it reflected in something reporters/victims can see? How is it making a difference?** The Secretary of State has the subject matter experts in securities (investments and the people who to sell, promote or advise about investing), notary, counterfeits, and charities, so our staff is ideally positioned to assess whether conduct rises to the level of a crime or whether it is civil or administrative or nothing actionable. However, NC SOS can only act on what it knows about. Harm and loss only increase the longer a problem is unreported. Patterns can be detected when crimes are reported, and evidence from one case may help in another. The Secretary of State's Office appreciates referrals and evaluates carefully reports made.