

Canada

Population 40.1 million · Latest figures: 2025

Canadians reported CAD 704 million lost to fraud to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) in 2025, up from about CAD 645 million in 2024 and CAD 165 million in 2020. The centre estimates that only 5% to 10% of fraud is reported. Police recorded 205,098 incidents of fraud and identity crime in 2025, a rate 4% lower than in 2024 but 61% higher than in 2015.

No single body leads. The CAFC, run by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) with the Competition Bureau and the Ontario Provincial Police, collects reports and intelligence, and local police investigate. The Department of Finance leads policy with 11 other departments and agencies. The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada supervises how banks treat customers, and the telecoms regulator, the CRTC, sets rules on unwanted calls and spam.

The main changes are recent. A national reporting site, Report Cybercrime and Fraud, opened on 6 November 2025. A budget law passed on 26 March 2026 amends the Bank Act so that banks must keep policies to detect and prevent fraud against consumers, let customers switch off transfer features and lower their limits, and report fraud data. Draft regulations set 1 July 2027 as the start date. A bill to create a Financial Crimes Agency went to committee in June 2026, and in spring 2026 the government consulted on its first National Anti-Fraud Strategy, which would cover banks, phone companies and online platforms.



PEOPLE SCAMMED

4,038,949

12.3% of adults

People of every age are hit, in different ways. In reports to the CAFC in 2024, people under 50 were more likely to be victims and people over 50 lost more each time: those aged 60 and over lost CAD 180 million, 28% of the total, about CAD 21,600 a case, against CAD 3,600 for people in their twenties. Teenagers are the main targets of sextortion. In the national victimisation survey, immigrants, people with disabilities, university graduates and people on high incomes were more likely to have been defrauded, and men and women were hit about equally.

By money, most fraud starts online: social networks accounted for CAD 200 million of 2024 losses, other internet contact for CAD 158 million, email for CAD 84 million, phone calls for CAD 74 million and text messages for CAD 40 million. By number of reports the telephone led in 2023. Common scripts are a bank's fraud department saying an account is compromised, a grandchild needing bail, a job offer by text, and an online romance that turns into an investment tip. Chinese-speaking students and newcomers are phoned by people posing as police from China or Hong Kong.

Much of it is run from abroad: in 2025 victims' payments went to 3,019 bank accounts in 46 countries, led by Canada, the United States, Hong Kong, Vietnam and the United Kingdom. Canada also hosts scam call centres: in 2025 the United States charged 25 Canadians over Montreal call centres that took more than US\$21 million from elderly Americans.

PEOPLE WHO LOST
MONEY

2,262,417

56% of victims

The largest sums leave by cryptocurrency and bank wire. In reports to the CAFC in 2024, CAD 163 million was sent as cryptocurrency, at an average of CAD 23,815 a payment, and CAD 154 million by wire transfer, often to accounts abroad. Interac e-Transfer, the instant transfer service that 88% of Canadians have used, carried CAD 37 million, a quarter more than in 2023 after banks raised the limit to CAD 10,000 in May 2024.

Cash handed over in person or sent by post is typical of grandparent and prize scams, and Bitcoin machines are used in scams that threaten arrest. Canada has nearly 4,000 cryptocurrency cash machines, and in spring 2026 the government proposed to ban them. People recruited through fake job offers receive the money and pass it on as mules.

Safeguards are thin. Transfer features are switched on by default and can allow online transactions of up to CAD 50,000. From 1 July 2027, under draft regulations, banks must ask for consent before enabling wire, international and e-Transfer features on new accounts, let customers switch them off and lower their limits, apply an unverified request to raise a limit only on the next business day, and keep written criteria for holding suspicious transactions. On the phone network, carriers must block calls from numbers that cannot exist and verify caller ID under a standard called STIR/SHAKEN, and an AI filter approved in 2021 has blocked billions of calls. Scam texts can be forwarded to 7726.

MONEY LOST

US\$9.24b

C\$12.92b in a year,
0.40% of GDP

Losses reported to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) have risen every year, from CAD 165 million in 2020 to CAD 534 million in 2022, CAD 644 million in 2024 and CAD 704 million in 2025. CAD 351 million was reported in the first half of 2026 alone.

Investment scams carry the largest losses: CAD 351 million in 2025, ahead of spear phishing at CAD 67.9 million, romance at CAD 63.3 million and job scams at CAD 50.6 million. Single losses are large: in 2024 an investment scam cost its victim CAD 78,309 on average and a spear phishing fraud CAD 107,415. Losses to fake bank investigators rose from CAD 16.4 million in 2024 to CAD 28.3 million in 2025, and to recovery scams, which promise to get lost money back, from CAD 9.1 million to CAD 25.9 million.

In Statistics Canada's General Social Survey, 2.5 million people aged 15 and over were defrauded in the 12 months before the 2019 survey. For the most serious fraud of the past five years the median loss after reimbursement was about CAD 600, and about a quarter of victims lost at least CAD 1,000. The police recorded 177,472 frauds in 2025, 4% fewer than in 2024 but 61% more than in 2015.

MONEY RETURNED

US\$956.6m

10.4% of the money
lost

Most of the money Canadians get back is refunded by banks and card companies. By law a customer's liability for unauthorised use of a bank credit card is capped at CAD 50 unless they were grossly negligent, and the card companies promise zero liability. Most banks follow a voluntary debit card code under which customers are not liable for losses beyond their control. For e-Transfers and wires sent by someone who broke into an account, a bank may hold the customer liable, and a customer tricked into sending money bears the loss. Quebec passed a law in November 2024 on customers' liability for deposit accounts, to start on a date set by order.

A refused victim can complain to the bank, which has 56 days to answer, then to the free Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments (OBSI), which recommends compensation where the bank should bear the loss. Its fraud cases nearly doubled to 1,815 in its year to October 2025.

Little is pulled back from scammers. The CAFC helped recover CAD 6.7 million from 2021 to 2023 and CAD 3.35 million in 2024; a Quebec business got back about CAD 3.5 million in 2026 after quickly reporting two fraudulent wire transfers. The CAFC warns that money sent as cryptocurrency or by other real-time payments is moved quickly and is difficult to recover.

REPORTED

75%

of victims reported it

In Statistics Canada's 2019 General Social Survey, 10.5% of fraud victims of the previous five years told the police about the most serious fraud, 7% told the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) and 65% told their bank or card issuer. Police services recorded 177,472 frauds in 2025, down from 182,696 in 2024, with 22,237 identity frauds, down from 22,508, and 5,389 identity thefts, down from 5,655.

Local police investigate. The CAFC, run by the RCMP, does not: it keeps the national record of fraud reports and shares it with police forces. It received over 112,000 reports in 2025, up from 108,878 in 2024, and had processed 40,679 of them, which record 27,693 victims and \$704 million lost. In 2024 it processed only 47% of the reports it received, a fall it put partly down to its own capacity. It estimates that only 5% to 10% of fraud is reported to it.

Since November 2025 victims and witnesses report to the CAFC and the RCMP's National Cybercrime Coordination Centre through a single national online system, anonymously if they wish. A complaint goes first to the bank, then to the Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments (OBSI). In its year to October 2025, OBSI opened 1,815 fraud cases, up from 966, a third of its 5,438 banking cases, and fraud was its leading banking complaint; public inquiries rose 58% to 26,024.

POLICE RECORDS

205,098

cases recorded by the
authorities

The figure shown here is police-reported fraud: 205,098 incidents recorded by police services across Canada in 2025 and compiled by Statistics Canada, made up of 177,472 frauds, 22,237 identity frauds and 5,389 identity thefts. It counts incidents that police judged to be founded, covers every kind of fraud including fraud against businesses and government, and carries no losses. An incident is counted once, under its most serious offence. The rate, 492 per 100,000 people, fell 4% in 2025 after a decade of increases and is 61% above 2015. Police classed 44,542 of the frauds as cybercrime.

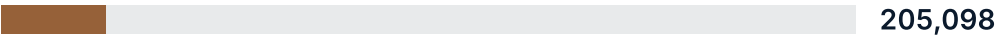
Few cases are solved: 18,309 frauds were cleared in 2025, about one in ten, and 13,061 people were charged. Extortion, counted separately, came to 12,132 incidents, more than three times the rate of 2015. Reports to the CAFC are a separate count: over 112,000 received in 2025, of which 40,679 were processed, with 27,693 victims and CAD 704 million lost. Fraud carries up to 14 years in prison where more than CAD 5,000 is taken, identity fraud up to 10 years and identity theft up to five.

In enforcement, a four-day operation in December 2025 with more than 25 banks, phone companies, technology firms and regulators took 3,021 actions against scam phone numbers, websites, email accounts and bank accounts. From March to May 2026 the CAFC, working with eight Asian anti-scam centres, flagged 333 bank accounts, 491 phone numbers and 1,523 email accounts.

Victims who told the police (estimated)



Cases recorded by the authorities



MOST COMMON

1. Card fraud

By money, investment fraud dominates: CAD 351 million of the CAD 704 million reported to the CAFC in 2025, from 3,867 victims. Victims are drawn in by social media advertisements, some using deepfake videos of public figures, or by an online friend, to a trading site that shows invented profits. They buy cryptocurrency, send it on, and are asked for fees when they try to withdraw.

Next come spear phishing, in which a business is tricked by a forged email into paying an invoice into the wrong account (CAD 68 million), romance scams (CAD 63 million) and job scams (CAD 51 million), where paid online tasks demand ever larger deposits. In the bank investigator scam (CAD 28 million) a caller posing as the bank's fraud team has the victim move money, read out a security code or hand a card to a courier. Recovery scams, which charge earlier victims a fee to get their money back, nearly tripled to CAD 26 million. Extortion (CAD 23 million) includes threats of arrest or deportation and sextortion.

By number of reports identity fraud leads, with 8,403, followed by investment (4,409), service scams such as fake tech support (3,393), requests for personal information (3,016) and phishing (2,869). The grandparent scam, a call saying a grandchild needs bail, brought 1,225 reports in 2024. In the 2019 national survey the commonest fraud was a card or account used without permission, which 12% of people had suffered in five years, against 4% who had been tricked out of money.

GOVERNMENT
RESPONSE

Canada is only now moving from advice to obligations, and none of the new duties is yet in force. The Auditor General found in 2024 that the RCMP and the telecoms regulator lacked the capacity and tools to enforce the law against cybercrime, and that people were left to work out where to report. The CAFC processed 47% of the reports it received in 2024 and 40,679 of more than 112,000 in 2025. Reported losses rose every year, from CAD 165 million in 2020 to CAD 704 million in 2025. Police clear about one fraud in ten, and money recovered with the CAFC's help in 2024 was under 1% of reported losses.

Banks, phone companies and platforms do work with police, but by choice: more than 25 organisations joined a four-day disruption exercise in December 2025, and a Canadian Anti-Scam Coalition chaired by the bankers' association runs awareness campaigns. The finance department concluded in 2026 that voluntary measures would not be adequate.

The Bank Act changes passed in March 2026 oblige banks to keep fraud policies, give customers control of transfer features and report fraud data from 2027, with the first figures due in May 2029. They do not make banks refund victims: a customer deceived into paying still bears the loss. Duties for phone companies and platforms, with possible redress for victims, were only consulted on in 2026. The bill creating a Financial Crimes Agency is in committee, and a private member's bill would require platforms to stop fraudulent content.

Calculation Methodology & Sources

People scammed

- 12.3%. Where reliable survey data is not available, we estimate using mobile and broadband penetration.
- 12.3% of 32,803,383 adults.

People who lost money

- 56.0%. Where reliable survey data is not available, we estimate using mobile and broadband penetration.

Money lost

- 2,262,417 victims who lost money, at an average of C\$5,711 each, gives C\$12.92b.
- Average loss printed by Statistics Canada for victims with a loss, after reimbursement, grossed up to before reimbursement: CAD 5,120 / (1 - 0.1035).
- US dollars at 0.715253524 per CAD.
- Share of GDP: US\$9.24b against GDP of US\$2.32tn in 2025. World Bank, GDP (current US\$) 2025.

Money returned

- European Banking Authority and European Central Bank, 2025 Report on Payment Fraud, Level average, see note.
- No national figure covers every route, so the average is used for countries where the law makes banks refund unauthorised fraud. Worked out: banks return 16.2% of money lost through banks, the average of France, Chile, Spain, Greece, Brazil, Italy, the Netherlands and Germany; banks returned CAD 1.20bn (16.2% of the 57.5% of money lost through banks); CAD 137.3m came back on money lost outside banks (2.5%, measured in the Federal Reserve's household survey for victims who paid only by crypto, cash, gift cards or money transfer firms).
- 10.4% of C\$12.92b lost.

Reported

- Borrowed from Indonesia, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam: 75.0%. The median of the shares measured by the non-government survey: Indonesia (48.0%), India (87.9%), Malaysia (55.2%), the Philippines (76.9%), Singapore (87.1%), Thailand (75.0%) and Vietnam (65.2%).

Police records

- Borrowed from Indonesia, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam: 41.4%. The median of the shares measured by the non-government survey: Indonesia (28.0%), India (53.4%), Malaysia (41.4%), the Philippines (13.5%), Singapore (54.8%), Thailand (45.8%) and Vietnam (39.4%).
- 205,098: Fraud cases recorded by the police of Canada (fraud, identity fraud and identity theft incidents).

Most common

- Ranked by kinds of fraud recorded in the national victimisation survey (General Social Survey 2019). 43.4% of answers are methods such as phishing, or other, and are not ranked.

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