



Counterfeit or Fraudulent Postage Stamp Offers

Fraud Aware has been receiving questions about discounted postage stamps.

Some discounted stamps offers may be genuine, but there is no easy way to identify a counterfeit stamp from a real one. For example, we have received reports of a situation where multiple post offices examined and approved stamps in question, only to have a USPS Postal Inspector later seize all unused stamps.

We have also received reports of hundreds of rolls of stamps being ordered and paid for but never shipped to the person ordering them and many thousands of dollars being lost due to counterfeit postage stamps.

The following article is posted on the Official website of the United States Government¹:

Don't Get Stuck with Bogus Stamps!

Are you looking online for a good deal on postage stamps? Is a substantial discount of up to fifty percent off an order of United States Forever® Stamps too good to pass up? If so, keep scrolling, they're probably counterfeit. To ensure your trusted communication arrives at its destination without delay, the Postal Inspection Service wants you to be aware of—and avoid—phony postage.

The number of counterfeit stamps being sold from online platforms has escalated. Scammers peddle fake stamps on social media marketplaces, e-commerce sites via third party vendors, and other websites. Counterfeit stamps are often sold in bulk quantities at a significant discount—anywhere from 20 to 50 percent of their face value. That's a tell-tale sign they're bogus.

Purchasing stamps from a third-party wholesaler or online websites can be unpredictable. You have no way to verify whether they are genuine or not. The Postal Inspection Service recommends purchasing from Approved Postal Providers™. Approved vendors can include legitimate “big box” or warehouse retailers who do provide very small discounts on postage stamps, but this is through resale agreements with the Postal Service.

Learn more about stamps and where to safely buy them at:

<https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Postage-Stamps-The-Basics#foreverstamps>

<https://tools.usps.com/find-location.htm>

Facts and Tips from the United States Postal Service. (USPS)

- 1. Be wary of significant discounts. A substantial discount means the stamps are likely counterfeit.*
- 2. Did you know the most frequently encountered counterfeit stamp is the Flag Stamp?*

Summary: There is a risk of buying counterfeit and possibly illegal postage when you do not purchase authentic stamps directly from the United States Postal Service. Very small discounts may be found at approved retailers, such as Wal Mart, CVS, Walgreens, Kroger, and others.

¹<https://www.uspis.gov/news/scam-article/counterfeit-stamps> 08/03/2022

Fraud Aware is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservative Anabaptist resource for fraud identification, education, and prevention.

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Our literature packet includes booklets on Identifying Illegal Investments and warnings about Investment Frauds Among Us. There are stories written by victims of recent scams and notes from a public meeting with the FBI. Also included is information on phone scams, gift card scams, and business scams. Learn how scammer's use intimidation, fear, and untraceable payment methods. And how they pretend to be someone you trust while creating a sense of urgency. Some of this information can be downloaded from FraudAware.us, or contact us today to request our free literature packet!

