

August 9, 2024

Andy Jassy, President and CEO  
Amazon  
410 Terry Avenue North  
Seattle WA 98109  
USA

Dear Mr. Jassy,

I am writing to you today as the President of the Canadian Taxi Association.

You may (or may not) be aware that in multiple Canadian cities, consumers are being harmed greatly in a scam which police refer to as “the Taxi scam\*.” Please see the appended pages to read police reports and warnings about the number of people and amounts of money involved.

In fact, the individuals perpetrating these scams are not Taxi drivers, but criminals only posing as Taxi drivers.

We believe that in most of these cases, criminals are able to fool innocent residents and citizens at least in part because they are driving around with generic “Taxi” signs on the roofs of their vehicles.

Traditionally in Canadian cities, these roof signs were available only through specialty shops which supplied the Taxi industry. The sellers knew who was making the purchase; for which Taxi brokerage the person drove; and in most cases, also installed the roof sign on the vehicle.

However, the generic signs being sold through Amazon (and other outlets) are available to anyone. This is not a safe, practical way to distribute the trusted “Taxi” signs which have become synonymous with physical and consumer safety for over a century.

On behalf of the Taxi industry in Canada, I am requesting that Amazon to consider no longer selling generic “Taxi” signs. We all fear that something much worse than a financial scam will be enabled by the disingenuous use of these Taxi signs by individuals who would misuse them to physically harm innocent persons. Please assure us you will act before this happens.

Sincerely,

*(Original Signed)*

Marc Andre Way, President  
Canadian Taxi Association

## **Hamilton police warn of Good Samaritan taxi scam**

*Hamilton Spectator | Published 12 June 2024*

Hamilton police are warning the public about a Good Samaritan taxi scam after multiple reports of the scheme were received by its financial crimes unit recently.

The scam involves two suspects, one posing as a taxi driver and the other as a customer, and a vehicle that looks like a taxi parked in high-traffic areas, police said.

The vehicle is described as a dark, four-door car with a taxi sign on top, said Const. Krista-Lee Ernst.

The pair stage an argument over the taxi driver refusing to accept cash payment, citing a protocol. Then a passerby is approached and asked to help by using their own debit card to pay in exchange for about \$10 cash, according to police.

However, police say that when the victim enters their PIN, the terminal records the card information and after processing the payment a fake bank card is handed back to the victim.

The scammers, now in possession of both the real debit card and PIN information, make fraudulent purchases, police said.

Victims have reported losing between \$400 and \$2,000, Ernst said. There have been 10 reported incidents in Westdale, Waterdown and Ancaster neighbourhoods.

“We believe there may be additional victims who have not yet reported their encounters,” she said, adding that even information from people who encountered the suspects but did not provide assistance could be valuable for the ongoing investigation.

Police encourage additional victims or witnesses to file a report online.

To protect against this type of scam police say: never give your card to anyone; do not return a terminal with your card still inserted; do not make payments to a stranger in exchange for cash; inspect your card after transactions; and cover your fingers when entering your PIN.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Hamilton police financial crimes unit at 905-546-3840.

To remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or [crimestoppershamilton.com](http://crimestoppershamilton.com).

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## **Sarnia police warn of taxi scam that targets good Samaritans**

*CBC News | Posted: Jul 18, 2024*

Have you been approached by someone in cab with a sob story who is looking for money? Police say its a scam that has victimized at least a dozen people in Sarnia.

In a media release Thursday, Sarnia police said the victims who have come forward to police have lost anywhere between \$980 to \$9,900.

In total, over a two-day span last weekend, police said between \$20,000 and \$30,000 was stolen.

Police explained that the "alleged taxi driver" pulls up or is waiting with a passenger and approaches the victims asking them to pay a small fare with their debit card.

"The scammers will come up with an emotional appealing scenario such as the cab doesn't accept cash, or that they are helping a child with a relatively small fare," the media release stated.

"The scammer may even return cash to the good Samaritan in exchange for the use of their debit card. The most common method has been to ask for help with a \$7.50 cent fare and return \$10.00 in cash to the individual for their assistance."

But then, the scammers keep the debit card and give back a fake one. During the transaction, they also capture the victim's PIN.

Sarnia police say officers are gathering evidence but think more than one group may be involved because the descriptions of the vehicles and scammers vary.

They're asking anyone who has been approached to contact the police service.

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**Crooks using taxi scam to steal PIN numbers and debit cards, Sudbury police warn**

*Northern News | Published Aug 01, 2024*

In a release, police said that from July 20 to July 27, officers have received calls about the same fraud, the same vehicle – a grey Hyundai sedan – and the same individuals.

The driver of the vehicle is a man who is about 30 and with a small build, black hair, brown eyes and scruffy facial hair.

The passenger is described as a Black male with a lighter complexion. He is about 16 and around 5-foot-8 with a heavier stature.

Police did not release an image of the youth due to his perceived age.

“In each incident, the suspect vehicle and driver impersonates a taxi or ride-share service,” police said. “The passenger exits the vehicle and approaches bystanders indicating that the driver only accepts debit and will compensate the bystander with cash if they will pay for the fare with a debit card.

“The driver provides the bystander with a debit machine where it is believed their PIN information is stolen and their debit card is swapped for a fake. The individuals subsequently use the stolen card and PIN to make purchases or money withdrawals.”

Anyone with information related to the identity of the driver is asked to contact police at 705-675-9171.

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