THE 10 MINUTE CHECK

How to check anyone who wants to handle your money

Dr. Fred Rouse • The REAL Money Doctor

Here's something most folks over 50 were never told. There's a free, public record on almost everyone in the money business. Their licenses. Where they've worked. And any complaints or trouble on their history. You don't need permission, and you don't need to be good with computers. You just need to know where to look. Here's the whole thing, start to finish.

Your 6-Step Check

1. **Ask for their CRD number first** — Before you ever meet, ask the person for their CRD number. It's a public ID number everyone in the business has. A straight shooter gives it to you without blinking. If they dodge, that tells you something all by itself.
2. **Go to the real site.** I've put the link right here so you can go straight to the real one: brokercheck.finra.org. It's free, no account, no sign-up. One habit worth keeping though. Crooks build copycat sites that look just like the real thing, so any time you're on a money site, glance up at the address and make sure it really says brokercheck.finra.org. That way nobody fools you with a fake.
3. **Search by the CRD number, not the name** — Two people can share a name. The CRD number belongs to one person only, so it's the accurate way to search. Type it in and pull up their record.
4. **Read the record, especially the Disclosures** — You'll see their

licenses, the firms they've worked for, and a section called Disclosures. That's the important one. It lists customer complaints, regulator actions, firings, and certain financial or legal matters. Read it slowly.

5. **Not a broker? Check the SEC too** — Some advisors aren't brokers, so they show up light on that first site. For them, use the government's advisor site, adviserinfo.sec.gov, and ask them for their Form ADV. It spells out how they're paid.
6. **Ask the one question, get it in writing** — Ask them plainly: "Are you a fiduciary, required to put me first, one hundred percent of the time?" Ask for the answer in writing. How they handle that question tells you almost everything.

What those disclosures actually mean...

A settled complaint means money was paid to make a dispute go away. A dismissed one was closed with nothing paid. One old settlement isn't always a dealbreaker. But a pattern of the same kind of complaint is a real warning sign. And anything involving fraud, theft, or trading without permission is your cue to run, not walk, and keep your money.

Here's why ten minutes is worth it. Nobody guards your retirement the way you will, because nobody has as much riding on it as you do. The wrong person, caught too late, can undo years of your saving in a hurry. Catch it before you ever hand over a dollar, and you keep your money, your years, and your say over how you spend them.

one shut, five still draining...

This is one of the six leaks draining your retirement, and it's the one you just learned to shut. There are five more still running. ***Never Burned Again*** shows you how to close all six, so you keep more of what's yours.

See all six: DrRouseNow.com/neverburned