A REGULATOR-SOURCED FIELD GUIDE

Crypto Influencer Scams

What regulators and consumer-protection agencies actually say

Disclaimer: *This guide is not intended to target or accuse any specific person, influencer, platform, or gender. It is for identifying and understanding scam-like practices and misleading financial promotions documented by regulators and consumer-protection agencies.*

01 Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

United States

The FTC has specifically warned about investment scams promoted through social media, including cryptocurrency. According to the FTC, scammers may use:

- Social-media posts and advertisements
- Claims of making huge profits quickly
- Luxury-lifestyle success stories
- Fake testimonials
- Fake investment platforms & fake account balances showing supposed profits

Takeaway: A screenshot showing profits is not proof the profits are real. Independently verify investment claims.

02 SEC / Investor.gov

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

Investor.gov has warned about social-media investment fraud and crypto investment scams, saying fraudsters can use:

- Social-media influencers & celebrity endorsements
- Fake testimonials & fabricated historical returns
- Fake investment-account balances

Red flags: Images of rapidly rising accounts can be fake. Being asked to pay extra taxes, fees or deposits before withdrawing profits is a documented scam tactic.

03 FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)

The FBI's IC3 has documented cryptocurrency investment schemes involving fake online personas, following a common pattern:

- Approach victim → Build trust → Introduce crypto investment
- Show fictitious returns → Encourage additional investment → Steal funds

The FBI warns scammers can build a public persona as a crypto investment expert to direct victims toward specific trading apps or accounts.

04 SEBI

Securities and Exchange Board of India

Particularly relevant for Indian audiences. SEBI has examined the growing role of "finfluencers" who use Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and other channels to influence financial decisions. SEBI's materials highlight concerns around finfluencers who may:

- Promote financial products or services
- Influence followers' investment decisions
- Receive undisclosed compensation
- Use referral arrangements
- Provide recommendations without appropriate registration or authorisation

Important: not every financial influencer is a scammer. Popularity is not proof of credibility.

05 FTC: The "Luxury Lifestyle" Warning

In an August 2026 consumer alert, the FTC described social-media personalities displaying fancy cars and exotic trips while claiming people could achieve the same lifestyle by learning to trade. The warning was connected to enforcement action against International Markets Live (IML), also known as IM Mastery Academy and IYOVIA — alleged to have used false earning claims to recruit people into an investment-training scheme.

Takeaway: A luxury lifestyle is not evidence of trading performance.

WHAT THESE SOURCES HAVE IN COMMON

Different agencies. Different countries. Similar warning signs.

BIG PROFIT PROMISES

"Double your money." "Guaranteed returns." "Low risk, huge upside." The FTC and SEC both flag unrealistic or guaranteed returns.

SOCIAL-MEDIA SUCCESS STORIES

Screenshots, testimonials, luxury cars or an apparently successful lifestyle don't independently prove legitimacy.

FAKE OR FABRICATED RETURNS

Fake investment dashboards and fabricated account growth are documented in crypto investment scams.

HIDDEN INCENTIVES

SEBI has raised concerns about undisclosed compensation and referral arrangements involving financial influencers.

PRESSURE TO INVEST

"Limited slots." "Invest now." "Don't miss this opportunity." Urgency is a common warning sign.

*This guide is not about targeting any specific person or gender. There are legitimate financial educators, traders and crypto businesses. The concern is with anyone who uses **fake or unverifiable profits + unrealistic promises + hidden incentives + pressure to invest** to convince people to hand over their money.*

So before believing the lifestyle — verify the claims.

SOURCES

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)	Investment Scams / Cryptocurrency Scam Alerts
U.S. SEC — Investor.gov	Social Media & Investment Fraud / Crypto Investment Scam Alerts
FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)	Cryptocurrency Investment Fraud Public Service Announcements
SEBI	Finfluencer and Investor Protection Materials

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