GALLUP®

JUNE 29, 2026

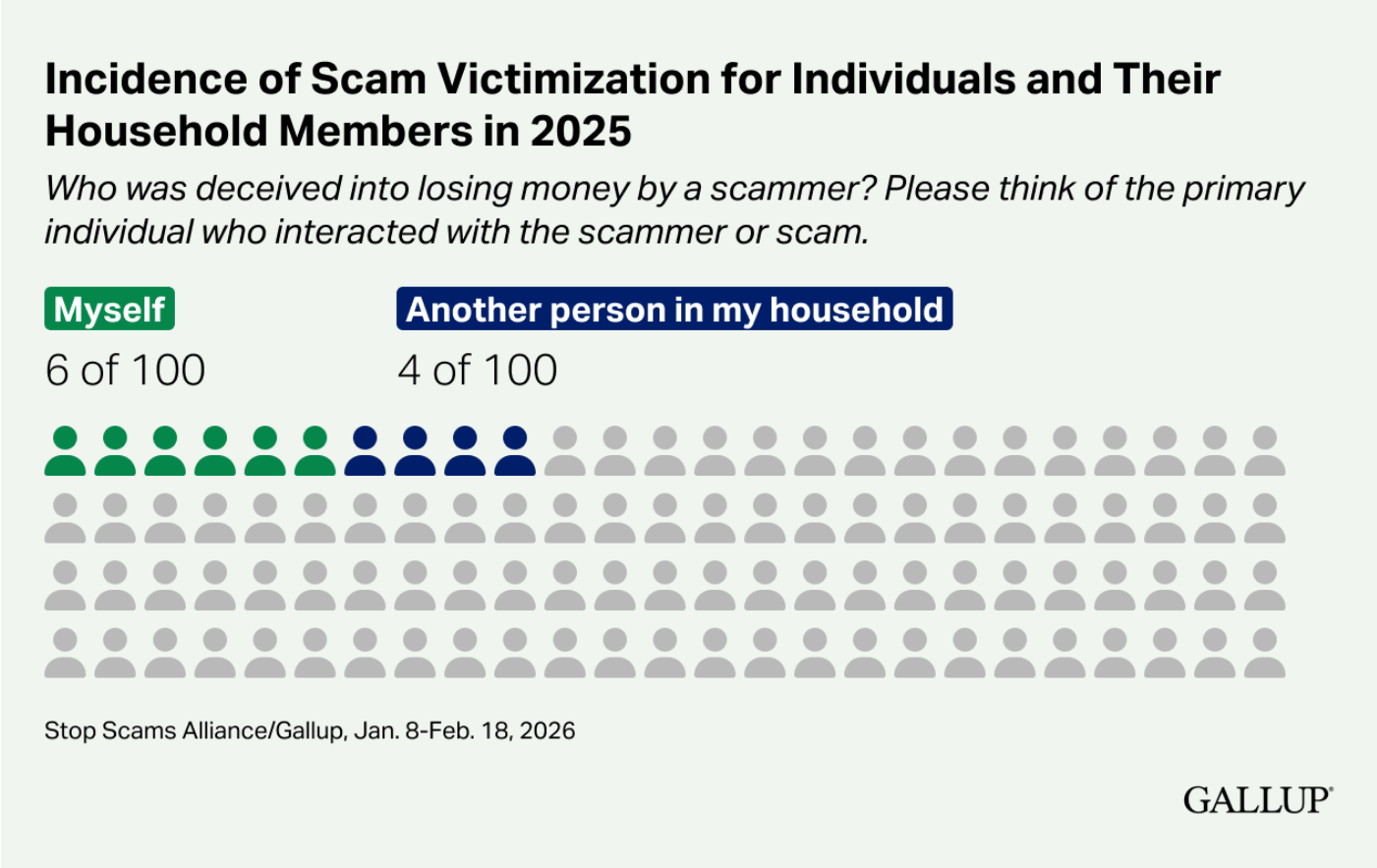
Scam Victims Report Billions Lost and Harm to Mental Health

Nearly three in four scam victims (73%) have experienced a negative effect on their mental health or wellbeing



BY ANDREA MALEK ASH

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Six percent of U.S. adults (an estimated 15 million people) report being personally scammed in 2025. An additional 4% of adults say that while they themselves were not scammed, another member of their household was. Altogether, 10% of U.S. adults experienced a scam last year, either directly or through someone in their household.



These findings are from a new report, *United States of Scams: The Financial and Emotional Fallout*, by the Stop Scams Alliance and Gallup. The report is based on a nationally representative survey of 5,173 U.S. adults, conducted by web and mail Jan. 8-Feb. 18, 2026. Respondents were sampled from the probability-based Gallup Panel.

Americans' reports of victimization in 2025 vary by household income and education, with lower-income households and individuals without a bachelor's degree more likely than their counterparts to report being scammed. For example, 7% of adults with less than a bachelor's degree were personally scammed, compared with 4% of those who have a bachelor's degree or more. Black (8%) and Hispanic (9%) adults are also more likely than White adults (5%) to say they were scammed. On the other hand, there is no difference in victimization rate by age level.

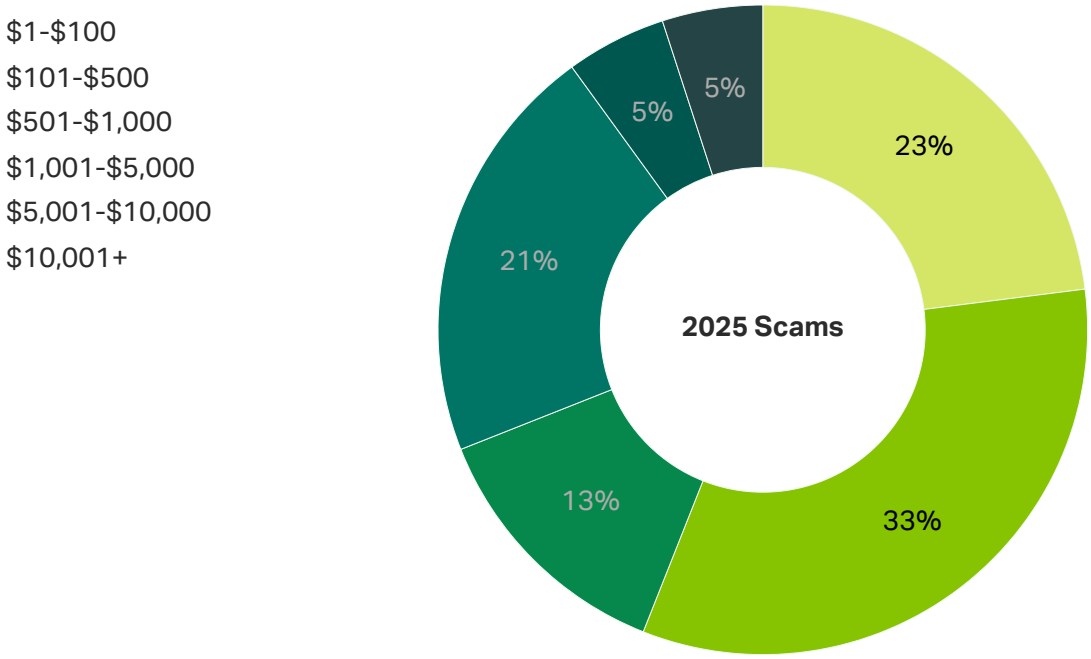
While 6% of adults say they were personally scammed in 2025, the lifetime toll is considerably greater. Nearly one in four (24%) say they have personally been scammed at some point in their adult life, including 10% who have been victimized more than once.

Victims Lost an Estimated $68 Billion in 2025

In more than half of the scams reported to Gallup (56%), individuals lost $500 or less. However, the average loss per scam was $5,578, as some scams reached tens of thousands of dollars.

Distribution of Dollars Lost Per Scam in 2025

In total, how much money was lost to this scam? Please include all money lost. We want to know how much was originally lost, even if the scam victim later got back some or all of the money lost.



Represents all scams reported to Gallup for the 2025 calendar year, including scams that affected the respondent directly and those that affected a household member of the respondent.

Stop Scams Alliance/Gallup, Jan. 8-Feb. 18, 2026

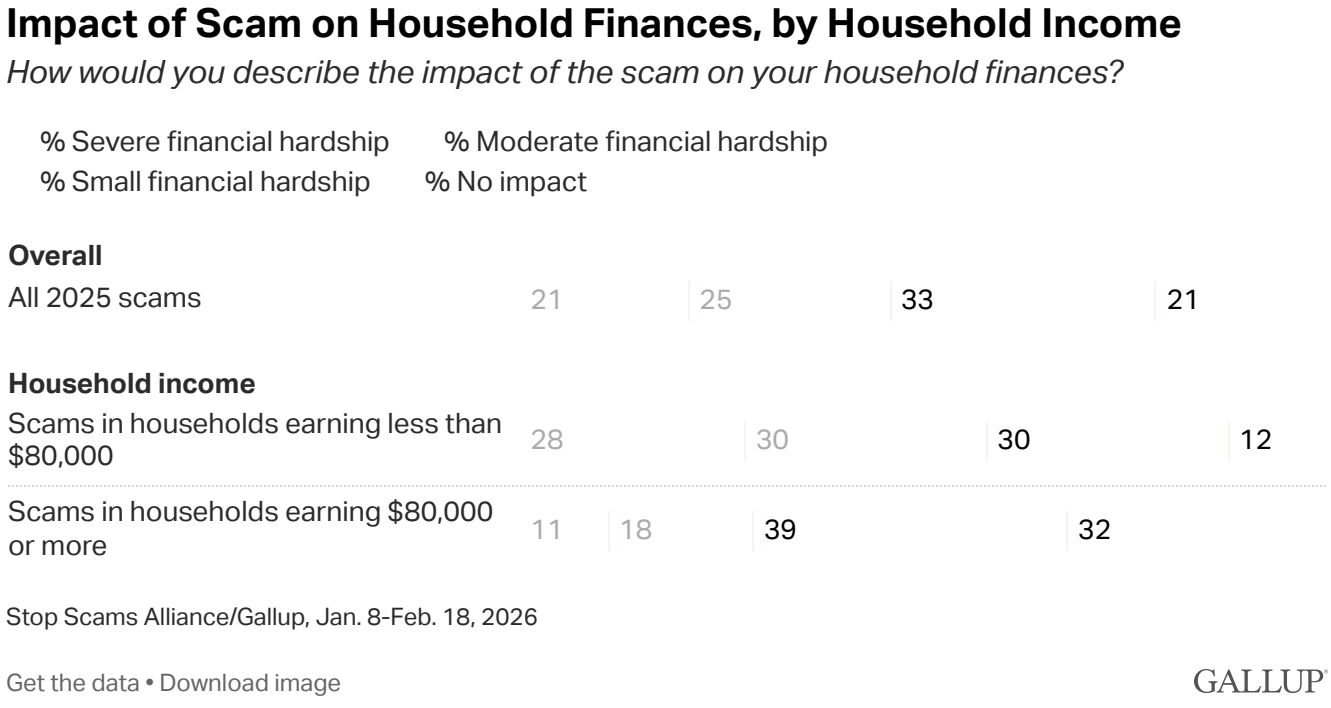
Get the data • Download image

GALLUP

The financial toll in 2025 is estimated at $68 billion, amounting to an average of $186 million stolen each day. This estimate is based only on reports from individuals who say they themselves were the scam victim, to allow for an aggregate projection of the cost to scammed adults in the U.S. More details about how these dollar estimates were calculated are available in the survey methods section as well as the full report.

Scams Create Financial and Emotional Hardships for Victimized Households

One in five adults who were personally victimized or live in a household that was scammed in 2025 (21%) say it created a severe financial hardship for their household, while an additional 25% say it created a moderate financial hardship. Households earning less than $80,000 annually were hit harder.

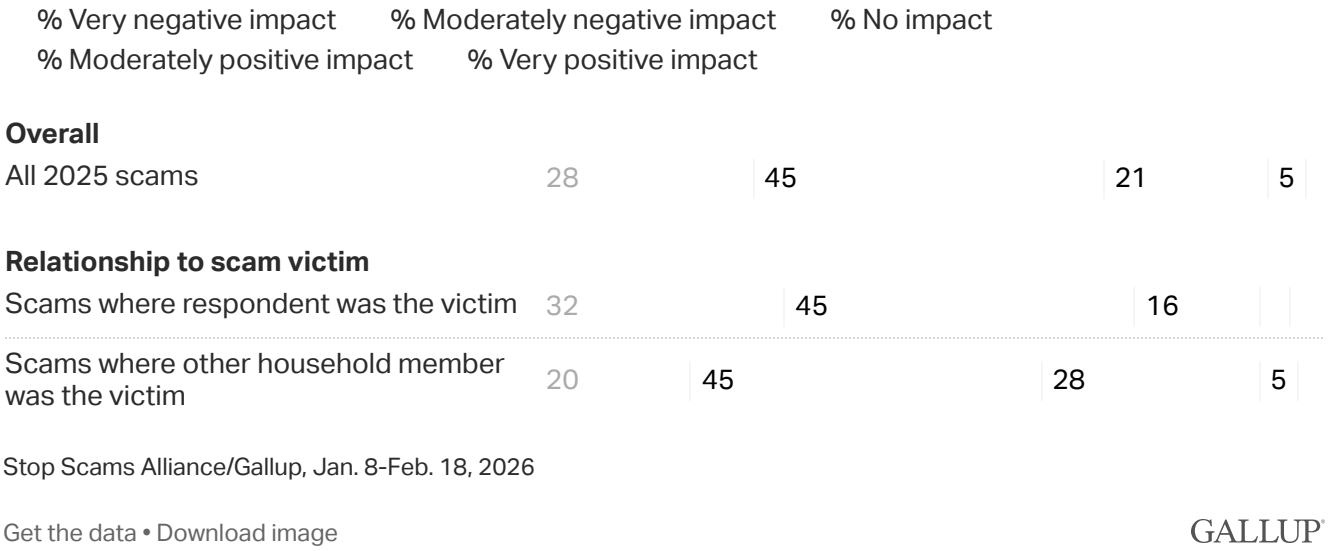


Financial loss may be the most tangible consequence of a scam, but emotional damage is also widespread. More than one in four adults in scam-affected households (28%) say the impact on their mental health or wellbeing was very negative, and 45% say the impact was moderately negative — meaning nearly three in four (73%) experienced a negative effect on their mental health or wellbeing.

The emotional toll is pervasive among people who were directly targeted as well as those who live with someone who was scammed. Among adults whose household member (rather than themselves) was the primary scam victim, a majority (65%) still reported a negative impact on their own wellbeing.

Impact of Scam on Mental Health or Wellbeing, by Relationship to Scam Victim

How would you describe the impact the scam has had on your mental health or wellbeing?



Stop Scams Alliance/Gallup, Jan. 8-Feb. 18, 2026

Get the data • Download image

GALLUP

Ongoing worry about becoming a victim may also contribute to the emotional toll caused by scammers. In 2023, Gallup research found that U.S. adults expressed more worry about being a victim of identity theft (72% worried frequently or occasionally) and being tricked into providing financial information to scammers (57%) than they did about having their car stolen (51%), having their home burglarized (44%) or getting mugged (37%).

Bottom Line

Scams are a common occurrence in the United States — about one in four adults have been personally victimized at some point in their lifetime, and an estimated 15 million were scammed in 2025. The financial toll is substantial, with losses reaching an estimated $68 billion in 2025 alone. But the data suggest the cost of scams extends beyond what can be measured in dollars, as nearly three in four victims say the experience negatively affected their mental health or wellbeing.

Qualitative data from the *United States of Scams* report provide additional context, suggesting that experiences with a scam can often leave victims more guarded — less willing to make online purchases or to engage with unfamiliar businesses. At a time when

institutional trust in the U.S. is already weak, the prevalence of scams represents not just a personal financial threat, but a broader erosion of confidence in the businesses and systems used in everyday life.

Read the United States of Scams *report.*

Stay up to date with the latest insights by following @Gallup on X and on Instagram.

SURVEY METHODS

RELEASE DATE: June 29, 2026
SOURCE: Gallup https://news.gallup.com/poll/710984/scam-victims-report-billions-lost-harm-mental-health.aspx
CONTACT: Gallup World Headquarters, 901 F Street, Washington, D.C., 20001, U.S.A
+1 202.715.3030

Copyright © 2026 Gallup, Inc. All rights reserved.

Gallup uses cookies to ensure the best website experience. Please select the cookies you want. You can change this setting anytime, but doing so may impair functionality on our websites. Privacy Statement

Accept All Manage Preferences



Cookie Settings

Gallup uses cookies to ensure the best website experience. Please select the cookies you want. You can change this setting anytime, but doing so may impair functionality on our websites. Privacy Statement

Essential

We use essential cookies to provide our visitors basic functions through our websites. Without these cookies, our websites will not work properly.

☑ Analytics

We use statistics cookies to collect information anonymously. This information helps us understand how our visitors use our websites.

☑ Marketing

Marketing cookies help Gallup improve the ads we display on third-party websites and allow third parties to gather web-usage information required to determine ad performance.

Accept All Save Preferences