

# Mitchell Crime Prevention Unit

## March Crime Prevention Tip

Topic: **Spring Break Safety**

### **Spring Break Safety: How to Eliminate the Chance of Fraud**

College is a very stressful time in a person's life . One of the ways college students relieve their stress is to go on a trip over spring break. But, sometimes these college students receive a burn before they even see the sun. This is caused by students being taken in by companies that subject the students to fraud. Some types of fraud that are common:

- Companies adding extra fees that were not originally agreed upon
- Companies not providing the accommodations they may have promised
- *Worst case scenario*: students were sold packages that did not exist and the "company" disappeared with the students money

There are some key ways to prevent fraud and allow for less stress.

### **Booking Your Trip**

- Book your trip through a company you are familiar with or someone else has used and referred you to
- Get a contract in writing that states what you have agreed upon verbally.
- Always read the fine print.
- Be cautious in believing what you are told. If it seems too good to be true it probably is.
- Make sure the dates you want to travel are the dates the tickets are issued for.
- Don't pay in cash; instead pay using a credit card. If you use your credit card to pay and the services you contracted for are not provided, you may not be liable for the charge on your card.
- Watch out for vouchers- steer clear on companies which ask you to redeem vouchers or certificates.

### **Traveling and Touring**

- Remember that some people prey on tourist. Be cautious of what you sign up for or who you trust when you are on spring break, especially in other countries where the laws are different.
- Always keep your luggage with you and in your site. If you must step away, make sure you ask a friend you can trust to keep an eye on your belongings.
- Never leave your passport, other forms of ID or money in an unsafe place. It is best to keep this with you at all times.
- Never walk alone or get into a vehicle with someone you do not know.

### **Entertainment**

- Keep any beverages with you and in your site at all times.
- Be aware of what you are drinking and how much- alcohol concentrations may be different in other countries.
- Keep your head clear to make wise decisions.