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## **Better Business Bureau Study Highlights Exit Companies' Fraud Against Timeshare Owners Across the U.S.**

*Study Reveals How Timeshare Owners are Victimized by Exit Companies*

WASHINGTON, June 26, 2019 – [The American Resort Development Association — Resort Owner's Coalition \(ARDA-ROC\)](#), representing over 1.5 million timeshare owners, recommends that owners read the [study](#) issued by the [Better Business Bureau \(BBB\) of Eastern & Southwest Missouri & Southern Illinois](#), before engaging with any third-party exit or relief company.

In the June 2019 study, *Timeshare Exit Trap: Better Business Bureau Study of How Some of Southwest Missouri's Timeshare Relief Operators Victimized Timeshare Owners across the U.S.*, the BBB surveyed complaints and documents from more than 400 consumers who believe they had been victimized by third-party exit companies. As part of the study, they conducted over 70 in-depth phone interviews with these consumers. "The common theme among the findings is that owners were convinced to pay large up-front fees, ranging from \$1,000 to more than \$30,000, for promised services that were not delivered," said VP of Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel of ARDA, Robert Clements. While the exit companies named by the BBB in the study were domiciled in Missouri, the victim's complaints came from 48 states and the District of Columbia. "This is not an isolated problem to Missouri," continued Clements. "We are hearing this from across the country and working with the appropriate government and enforcement agencies to educate them on the facts and to protect consumers. This report does an excellent job at framing the issues and I encourage regulators, legislators, and consumers to read it."



The timeshare industry, which has over nine million owners and generates over 540,000 jobs and \$10.8 billion in federal, state and local taxes in the U.S., has become a target for unscrupulous individuals and companies. As a result, the industry has increased its engagement with owners who want to understand safe **timeshare exit** options, often directly through their developer or property manager, which may be available for exiting their product. This information can be found at [www.responsibleexit.com](http://www.responsibleexit.com).

Red flags of exit and resale scams for timeshare owners to be aware of are:

- Calls or emails claiming to have an "interested buyer" for a timeshare;
- Caller claiming to be a representative of ARDA or ARDA-ROC. **Fact:** ARDA and ARDA-ROC only responds to inquiries from owners after an inbound request – there are absolutely no unsolicited calls, emails or communications;
- A company promises to modify, cancel or transfer an owner's timeshare for a large upfront fee;
- A company requests an upfront fee, or the wire transfer of money for a "service," "tax" or other "requirement" for the sale or transfer to be completed;
- If an offer sounds too good to be true, it likely is.

Owners who believe they have been unfairly taken advantage of or defrauded by an exit company should contact their state's Attorney General ([ConsumerResources.org](http://ConsumerResources.org)), the Attorney General in the state where the business is located, their local BBB office, or local law enforcement. For additional help contacting these resources, consumers can reach out to the ARDA-ROC Consumer Support Team at 1-855-939-1515.

For more information on options for exiting timeshare, visit [www.responsibleexit.com](http://www.responsibleexit.com) and [www.ardaroc.org](http://www.ardaroc.org).



The ARDA-Resort Owners' Coalition (ARDA-ROC) is a 501(c)4 non-profit entity funded by over 1.5 million individual timeshare owner's voluntary contributions. ROC is dedicated to preserving, protecting, and enhancing vacation ownership through smart policy and sensible regulation. We advocate for local, state, and federal policies that enable the vacation ownership industry to thrive and provide consumers with an enriched vacation ownership experience. For more information, visit [www.ardaroc.org](http://www.ardaroc.org).