

11-13-2023

Investment Fraud in the Mountain West

Riley Ruff

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Vanessa Booth

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Caitlin J. Saladino

Brookings Mountain West & The Lincy Institute

William E. Brown Jr.

Brookings Mountain West

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/bmw_lincy_cj



Part of the [Business Commons](#), [Economic Policy Commons](#), [Economics Commons](#), [Public Affairs Commons](#), and the [Public Policy Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Ruff, R., Booth, V., Saladino, C. J., Brown, W. E. (2023). Investment Fraud in the Mountain West. *Criminal Justice Fact Sheet No. 10* 1-3.

Available at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/bmw_lincy_cj/10

This Report is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Report in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Report has been accepted for inclusion in Criminal Justice by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.

INVESTMENT FRAUD IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST

Criminal Justice Fact Sheet No. 10 | November 2023

Prepared by: Riley Ruff, Vanessa Booth, Caitlin J. Saladino, and William E. Brown, Jr.

PURPOSE:

This fact sheet focuses on investment fraud data in the Mountain West states of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. The original report includes data from “The 2023 State of Investment Fraud” study conducted by Carlson Law.¹

ABOUT THE DATA:

More money was lost by Americans due to investment fraud than any other type of fraud in 2022.² In 2022, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported \$3.82 billion lost by Americans due to investment fraud, which is a record amount.³ Between 2021 and 2022, the rate of investment fraud increased 126% in the United States.⁴

Carlson Law, a firm specializing in investment fraud, released their study, “The 2023 State of Investment Fraud,” in response to the increase in investment fraud. The original report explores the frequency of investment fraud and how much money is lost in the United States. To adjust for population differences, the study includes the average loss per victim as well as the average amount lost per 100,000 people due to investment fraud in each state.

KEY FINDINGS:

1. Arizona (11th), Colorado (15th), Nevada (17th), and Utah (19th) all ranked among the top 20 states in the U.S. for the total number of investment fraud victims in 2022.
2. Arizona (8th) ranked among the top 10 states in the U.S. for the total dollar amount lost due to investment fraud in 2022. Arizona reported a total of 618 investment fraud victims with a total monetary loss of \$88.9 million in 2022.
3. Arizona (9th) ranked among the top 10 states in the U.S. for the average dollar amount lost per investment fraud victim. The average loss per investment fraud victim in Arizona was \$143,829.
4. Nevada (13.7 per 100,000 people) had the highest rate of investment fraud per 100,000 people in the Mountain West, and ranked 4th in the U.S. in 2022.
5. Among Mountain West states, New Mexico received the lowest ranking for every measure of investment fraud in 2022: total number of investment fraud victims (37th), total dollar amount lost due to investment fraud (46th), average dollar amount lost per investment fraud victim (48th), and rate of investment fraud per 100,000 people (28th).

¹ First Annual Study: The 2023 State of Investment Fraud, 2023 Edition *Carlson Law*. www.carlsonlaw.com/first-annual-study-the-2023-state-of-investment-fraud/

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

Table 1 displays the number of investment fraud victims and the national rank of each Mountain West state in 2022. Within the Mountain West, Arizona had the largest number of investment fraud victims (618). Arizona (11th), Colorado (15th), Nevada (17th), and Utah (19th) all ranked among the top 20 states in the U.S. for the number of investment fraud victims. New Mexico (37th) received the lowest ranking among Mountain West states, with 93 investment fraud victims.

Table 1: Total Number of Investment Fraud Victims in the Mountain West, 2022

Mountain West State	National Rank	Total Number of Investment Fraud Victims
Arizona	11 th	618
Colorado	15 th	475
Nevada	17 th	424
Utah	19 th	295
New Mexico	37 th	93

* Adapted from “The First Annual Study: The 2023 State of Investment Fraud”. *Carlson Law*. www.carlsonlaw.com/first-annual-study-the-2023-state-of-investment-fraud/

Table 2 shows the total dollar amount lost due to investment fraud in the Mountain West as well as the national rank for each state in 2022. Within the Mountain West, Arizona (\$88.9 million) lost the largest dollar amount due to investment fraud in 2022. Arizona (8th), Colorado (13th), Nevada (18th), and Utah (20th) all ranked among the top 20 states in the country for total dollar amount lost to investment fraud. New Mexico (46th) ranked lowest among Mountain West states and lost just over \$4.0 million to investment fraud in 2022.

Table 2: Total \$ Amount Lost due to Investment Fraud per State, 2022

Mountain West State	National Rank	Total \$ Amount Lost due to Investment Fraud
Arizona	8 th	\$88,886,631
Colorado	13 th	\$58,468,306
Nevada	18 th	\$40,890,597
Utah	20 th	\$31,131,583
New Mexico	46 th	\$4,032,420

* Adapted from “The First Annual Study: The 2023 State of Investment Fraud”. *Carlson Law*. www.carlsonlaw.com/first-annual-study-the-2023-state-of-investment-fraud/

Table 3 displays the average dollar amount lost per investment fraud victim in the Mountain West as well as the national rank of each state in 2022. Investment fraud victims in Arizona lost the greatest amount of money on average in the Mountain West (\$143,829). Arizona (9th) and Colorado (19th) were the only two Mountain West states to rank among the top 25 states in the U.S. for the average dollar amount lost per investment fraud victim. Utah (32nd), Nevada (33rd), and New Mexico (48th) all ranked among the bottom 25 states in the U.S. for the average dollar amount lost per investment fraud victim.

Table 3: Average \$ Amount Lost per Investment Fraud Victim in the Mountain West, 2022

Mountain West State	National Rank	Average Loss Per Victim
Arizona	9 th	\$143,829
Colorado	19 th	\$123,091
Utah	32 nd	\$105,531
Nevada	33 rd	\$96,440
New Mexico	48 th	\$44,359

* Adapted from “The First Annual Study: The 2023 State of Investment Fraud”. *Carlson Law*. www.carlsonlaw.com/first-annual-study-the-2023-state-of-investment-fraud/

Table 4 displays the rate of investment fraud per 100,000 people in the Mountain West as well as the national rank of each state in 2022. The rate of investment fraud per 100,000 people is included in the original report to account for population differences among states. Nevada (13.7 per 100,000 people) had the highest rate of investment fraud per 100,000 people in the Mountain West, and ranked 4th in the U.S. in 2022. New Mexico (28th) was the only Mountain West state to rank among the bottom 25 states in the U.S. for the rate of investment fraud per 100,000 people and had an investment fraud rate of 4.4 per 100,000 people.

Table 4: Rate of Investment Fraud per 100,000 people in the Mountain West, 2022

Mountain West State	National Rank	Rate of Investment Fraud/100,000 people
Nevada	4 th	13.7
Utah	10 th	8.9
Arizona	11 th	8.8
Colorado	14 th	8.0
New Mexico	28 th	4.4

* Adapted from “The First Annual Study: The 2023 State of Investment Fraud”. *Carlson Law*. www.carlsonlaw.com/first-annual-study-the-2023-state-of-investment-fraud/